ABSTRACT

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REMEDIATION AND COLLEGE WRITING: AN EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF BASIC WRITING PROGRAMS AT SELECTED HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES

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This study examines the effectiveness of basic writing programs at selected Historically Black Colleges. The objectives of many writing programs include, but are not limited to, the following: identifying students whose English, and/or reading comprehension skills are below acceptable levels; determining appropriate course placement for each individual student; providing advisement and learning enhancement courses for provisional students; and providing a writing/tutoring center for students who need supplemental assistance with writing assignments.

This study was based on the premise that not all students entering their first year of college have strong writing skills; therefore, basic writing programs are necessary for students who have deficiencies in writing. Basic writing programs exist at Historically Black Colleges just as they exist at many other American colleges. For that reason, it seems impractical for many colleges to assume that these students who need basic writing

skills can be simply ignored.

A case study analysis approach was used to analyze data gathered at selected Historically Black Colleges. The selected colleges which constitute this sample are as follows: Spelman College, Morehouse College; Tougaloo College; Bethune-Cookman College; Oakwood College; and Morris Brown College. These colleges include those that are utilizing basic writing programs and those that are not utilizing such programs. Among this selected sample of six Historically Black Colleges, the colleges that are utilizing basic writing programs are Bethune-Cookman, Oakwood, and Morris Brown, whereas Spelman, Morehouse, and Tougaloo have no such programs. The researcher found that the selected colleges not using basic writing programs have on their campuses remedial level writing students who could have benefited from a basic writing program, but due to political or financial reasons, these institutions choose to ignore the basic writing student. In contrast, however, those colleges that utilize some level of remedial writing instruction actually find improvement in the writing of students who have actively participated in their basic writing programs.

The study's findings reveal that basic writing programs should be established and preserved at Historically Black Colleges because the basic writing student still exists. In other words, the longevity of the basic writing program should be contingent upon whether or not the basic writing student is still alive and well on college campuses. Therefore, in order for Historically Black Colleges to fulfill their mission of producing young men and women who are truly educated, the colleges must find the means and the commitment to provide basic writing assistance to students who need this assistance.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the engines of development for any human society. The education of the mind begins, as it has often been suggested, from the time of infancy; and with proper education, there is no limit to what is possible for individuals and their society as a whole to accomplish. In a person's educational career, writing becomes an integral part of that journey. In the professional world, people are often introduced first through their writing; whether it is a resume, a cover letter, a memo, or even an essay, the need to write is crucial to the individual's development and accomplishment.

For most college-age students, choosing a college is often a tedious procedure. Students experience anxiety especially when they consider the numerous qualifications required by most institutions of higher education. These qualifications range from scoring 1000 and above on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) in verbal skills and math, to qualifying into college level Algebra and English composition courses after taking a placement test. The alarming reality, however, is that many students are not prepared for college level English composition courses in their freshman year.

The argument has been made consistently by educators such as Peter Schrag, who opposes remediation, and believes that the educational system in the United States has somehow failed many young people. There are many directions at which fingers can be

pointed, starting with the lack of proper funding for educational programs that would help students before they reach college, and other factors such as lack of preparation for students before they get to college, inadequate numbers of professionally trained teachers, and the lack of motivation and dedication on the part of students. Debates may continue now and for several more years to come but the very painful fact that still remains is that the basic writer in college does exist; therefore, it is the responsibility of colleges to provide a remedial writing program to accommodate the need of such writers.

Society should be producing people who are able to express themselves efficiently through writing. Writing is a system of thoughts that originally was regarded as a status symbol. Educated people can read and write. People learn how to speak without formal training, but most have to be taught how to read and write. As stated in the article "The Birth of Writing," Beatrice Salvini states that in ancient Mesopotamia, writing was invented in response to the need to keep accounts, make lists, and to keep records. The earliest recorded calculations were inscribed on tablets of clay. A second important early use of writing was, according to the historical linguist C.M. Millward (1996), "to preserve the exact wording of sacred texts that would otherwise be corrupted by imperfect memories and changes in the spoken language" (35). In short, writing or the ability to write was restricted to a small elite group of bookkeepers and priests.

The system of writing consisting originally of pictograms evolved gradually in the direction of abstraction, thus increasing its capacity to reproduce the whole of human discourse. Some time later, at the beginning of the second millennium B.C.E. and on the other side of the world, Chinese writing emerged, also in pictorial form, while the Egyptian and Mayan systems were based on the use of pictures as signifiers. Writing

initially had different purposes for different parts of the world. For instance, in China, it was primarily used to communicate with, allegedly, the dead. This can be seen in things such as the oracle bones.[1] Since both the spiritual and temporal power were often in the hands of the same individuals, writing became involved in the establishment of an individual's legal and political authority. English historian Xavier Perret indicates:

> The decisions of rulers filtered down only slowly to the other strata of society. When the Maya priests disappeared, the secrets of Maya writing died with them, and it was centuries before the Egyptian demotic script appeared, to be used in public administration, commerce and literature. In the West, widespread literacy dates back only to the late nineteenth century, and even today none of the modern industrialized societies can boast a 100 per cent literacy rate. Paradoxically, it is in these latter societies, where the law is set down in writing and writing therefore often has the force of law, that communication through images has been gaining ground considerably for the last century and a half. (9)

Writing, even in its embryonic stages, was a form of empowerment. Therefore, in Historically Black Colleges today, basic writing students should be taught to empower themselves by knowing how to write competently. African Americans have a painful history of atrocities that occurred during slavery because they could not read or write. In fact, keeping slaves illiterate was exactly how slave owners disempowered their slaves. A slave who could not read or write was crippled in his intellectual possibilities. History also reflects how African Americans have been overlooked in many of their contributions to society, especially in the area of inventions. Often, African Americans were not given

credit for their inventions because they were not capable of writing them down. Even after slavery when many African Americans learned how to read and write, the challenge then became, most African-Americans did not read and write well. This widespread belief added to the disadvantage of African Americans by being overlooked in many of their contributions to society.

It is a known fact throughout history, that cultures that have writing and the dominant language tend to dominate the society. Examples of this can be noted in cultures and societies in Greece, Rome, and even Africa. Author D. Lortsch states in his book, *Histoire de la Bible en France*, that there are leaders who have led their empires to greatness. For example, Alexander the Great, who at age 25, led Greece to emerge as the third world empire in 331 B.C.E. Emperor Justinian, "gave" the power of Rome to the Pope, and as a result, the Papacy was established in 538 C.E., and ruled for exactly 1260. These years became known as the "dark ages" because the priests forbade anyone to read. For hundreds of years only the priests were allowed to read the Bibles. Lastly, Rameses II who was the King of Egypt from 1304-1237 B.C.E. enslaved the Jewish people just as his ancestors had for many years. Language is connected to identity. When slaves were brought to America, it was the deliberate strategy of the slave masters that forced the Africans to learn their masters' language. Franz Fanon, a renowned black psychiatrist and thinker has argued that, "Every dialect is a way of thinking. Certainly this principle has been operative in the history of colonized people, where the colonizer's language and culture occupy a position superior to that of the colonized, even among the oppressed persons themselves." (171) In analyzing the colonized African mind, Fanon also points to the denigration of the African's native language as a basic manifestation of

the cultural rejection of Africa by both Europeans and Africans. A basic writing student, who can be defined as a college student who is intimidated by writing, and when placed in a class that has 25-30 students, has insecurities about writing that increase and eventually causes the student to retreat. The basic writing student who is never taught how to write effectively, will functions as a handicapped individual in society, and his possibilities will be limited. Basic writing students who are taught how to write effectively become a part of all areas of society that dominate. Without the command of language and writing the basic writer remains oppressed in a position of inferiority.

A popular debate that has recently come into education is about the legitimacy of black English in writing. Some supporters of black English such as Geneva Smitherman, author and Professor of Speech Communication, and author and linguist William Labov, argue that allowing students to use black English helps them to understand Standard English. The ideology of black English in the classroom, according to the supporters of black English, is not necessarily to teach it, but to utilize a language that African-American students already know, as a means to facilitate an understanding of the dominating language which in turn, creates better writing (Labov 24). If English teachers understand black English, they can communicate more effectively with African-American students. English teachers who support black English should do so by explaining to their students why the standards for black English should be kept separate from Standard American English in the classroom. African-American students will not improve their writing skills if they do not have a clear understanding of Standard English. Geneva Smitherman states:

> The value assigned to nonstandard speech only maintains so long as the nonstandard speech stays in its place. The standard, not the non-standard speaker, must be imitated if one is to get ahead. Undemocratic and unfair as it may seem, the fact is that Standard English is 'front door' English. The student needs to understand that a command of Standard English is vital to any American who aims to associate with speakers of the standard dialect on anything like an equal footing. (204)

Using black English in college writing is not going to catapult the basic writing student into writing English essays effectively and well. Black English can perhaps be utilized better in a creative writing environment with assignments on poetry, fiction, or even literature. For standard composition though, black English should be used in its appropriate context.

Contrary to popular belief, the basic writer did not just emerge within the last twenty to thirty years. Basic writers in America have been in existence for more than one century. According researcher and scholar of basic writing, Robert Connors,

> From its very beginning the college composition course has contained an integral element of remediation. Required freshman composition, whose prototype was introduced as 'English A' at Harvard in 1885, was the institutional response to a perceived literacy problem in the larger culture. (259)

If an elite institution of higher learning such as Harvard University recognized the need for remedial composition courses, clearly Historically Black Colleges should be expected to do no less.

In the seventeenth century, according to a recent report from the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP),[2] the University of Wisconsin offered entering students remedial courses in reading, writing and arithmetic as early as 1849. By 1894, more that 40% of college freshmen enrolled in pre-collegiate programs when only 238,000 students enrolled in all of higher education – almost the same percentage as today. By that time, all but 65 of the nation's 400 colleges had preparatory departments. In the 1940s and 1950s, with the influx of veterans taking advantage of the GI Bill, the percentage of under prepared students went up, as it would go up again with the increased funding provided by the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the spread of open admission in the 1970s. As the IHEP points out "there never was a golden age when all courses offered in higher education were college level. But there was a time when nearly all remedial students were white" (Creech 3).

Over the years in the 1800s and 1900s, "regular composition" (as it was referred to then), came to be so accepted and widespread to the extent that continuing to treat "regular composition" as remediation would have been tantamount to admitting that the entire culture was sick and not getting better. Even in the 1800s and 1900s, there remained students so radically unprepared that English composition courses could not deal with them, and thus, fairly early on, composition was divided into tracks. These tracks consisted of remedial composition and Standard English composition.

Now, in the year 2003, some colleges such as the ones utilized in this study, choose to pretend that the basic writer no longer exists. Perhaps, very few American colleges with very strict admissions standards may have the luxury of this position but this cannot be true for most colleges in the country. From the perspective of this

researcher's experience of teaching writing at various colleges, there is clearly an academic epidemic of severe writing deficiencies among college students. This is unfortunately the case at many Historically Black Colleges. The admissions policies at many Historically Black Colleges are established by the Administrative Council upon the recommendation of the Admissions Committee or the faculty. The Director of Enrollment Management usually is delegated to carry out these policies. Admission policies at many colleges in general often state the following requirements:

1. Official high school transcript verifying graduation with a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 grading scale, or a General Education Diploma (GED).
2. Application form completed, signed and dated.
3. Application fee of $45.
4. American College Test (ACT) score or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Score.
5. Two character references, preferably sent from the principal, a counselor or teacher.

It seems obvious that these requirements are by no means strict or even difficult. Of course the initial mission of Historically Black Colleges was to provide an opportunity of higher learning for African Americans. Therefore, creating very high standards for admittance would have defeated the purpose of setting up these institutions since African-Americans could not gain admittance into most white colleges.

However, in the year 2003, Historically Black Colleges should be raising the bar in their English Departments. Departmental meetings should not be spent restating the

fact that students are not meeting the standards of writing that they should, nor should English instructors feel pressured into inflating grades as a means to escape the proverbial elephant in the living room and avoid the topic entirely. If Historically Black Colleges are going to accept basic writers, then it is only fair to expect that the colleges accommodate the needs of the basic writer. Educators do a great injustice to basic writers by accepting them, and then throwing them into an academic abyss. It is about time for English Departments to take responsibility for these academically challenged students and not place bandages on trauma wounds by allowing remedial writing students in English 101 courses and sitting idly by while these remedial students fail.

Opposers of remedial writing programs argue that students who require remedial writing courses have not earned the right to be labeled "college students." The opposition further argues that remedial programs cost too much and they simply do not have the funding to support them. Remediation for African Americans especially, has a negative stigma attached to it. There are African Americans who believe they psychologically hinder their students and make them feel inferior by labeling them as remedial students. This opposition believes our students write poorly because the label "remedial student" forces them to. An article written by Ansley Abraham that appeared in the *Southern Regional Education Board* claims that, "taking challenging college-preparatory writing courses in the senior year of high school is the best way to reduce remedial writing courses in college" (5). Well, if this were an Utopian world, the ideology of perfection in composition prior to college would be plausible. However, this is a realistic world, and ignoring the needs of the basic writer reverts us to an unhealthy state of denial. Pretending that remedial writing courses are not necessary is tantamount

to educators behaving like ostriches with their heads in the sand. The article, "Goals for Education: Challenge 2000," written by Joe Creech, which also appeared in *The Southern Regional Education Board,* indicates:

> Remedial education in colleges and universities is now needed by about one-third of the students in states that have collegiate placement standards. If states are to increase the access to quality collegiate education, especially for minorities and adult citizens, colleges must offer some remedial education for years to come. (3)

Statistics from SREB (Southern Regional Education Board) reflects that more than 50 percent of African-Americans and Hispanic students begin their college careers by taking at least one remedial writing course.[3] This is an alarming state of affairs. Historically Black Colleges should be motivated by this disturbing fact to find ways to implement effective writing programs in Historically Black Colleges.

One of the ways that Historically Black Colleges can assist basic writers is by reducing the size of composition classes. Students who require remedial writing instruction are not going to flourish in an environment where they feel intimidated or where they will "fall by the wayside." The basic writer needs to be in a classroom where he/she can receive one-on-one interaction with his English instructor. The need of the student is greater; therefore, the attention coming from the instructor should be greater as well. This cannot be accomplished in an English composition class where the class size is twenty-five or more students. Furthermore, an overcrowded English class impairs the teaching ability of the instructor. As Nancy Sommers, composition theorist has rightly pointed out, an English teacher cannot effectively teach a class when the needs of the

students are on all sides of the spectrum (28). If she accelerates her material, the basic writers will be lost. However, if she moves at a slower pace, the more advanced writers in the class will become bored. It just is not realistic to assume that everyone in freshman English 101 has similar writing abilities and strengths. It is not fair to the English faculty, nor is it fair to the students. The English instructor is placed in a losing battle. An ideal remedial writing class should be no more that fifteen students. In addition, basic writers need to be identified immediately. A student's writing weakness should not be noticed after a student has been sitting in an English class for several weeks; rather, the student's writing deficiencies should already be noted before the student is accepted into college. This can be accomplished through using ACT and SAT scores, in addition to placement testing, which should be administered by the college. This is a step in the right direction of taking on pedagogical responsibility in writing programs.

David Bartholomae, a basic writing supporter and creator of the basic writing program at the University of Pittsburgh argues that,

> . . . a responsible pedagogy begins by making the soundest possible speculation about the syllabus built into the learner, rather than imposing upon a learner a sequence serving the convenience of teachers or administrators. The key to such a sequence lies in what we might call a characteristic failure of rhetorical imagining, a failure, on the part of basic writers, to imagine themselves as writers writing. Or, to phrase it another way, the key to an effective pedagogy is a sequence of instruction that allows students to experience the possibilities for contextualizing a given writing situation in

> their own terms, terms that would allow them to initiate and participate in the process by which they and their subject are transformed. (87)

The goal of basic writing instruction should be to discover ways that students can learn to see themselves as writers. It is true that so far, most of this argument appears descriptive and not prescriptive. This then leads to the question: now that the problem has been identified, how do Historically Black Colleges go about resolving it? The answer is simple: There should be a Developmental Studies Department that addresses solely the needs of the basic writer. In the next chapter, the researcher discusses the needs of the basic writer and the challenges that the basic writer presents to institutions of higher learning.

Research Method

The following is a description of the methodology used in this study to examine the various basic writing programs at the Historically Black Colleges and Universities that were selected for the study.

The selected Historically Black Colleges and the current writing programs at these selected institutions were the independent variables. To assess the writing programs and the remedial writing programs of selected institutions, a number of research instruments were used; these include the Writing Courses Questionnaire For Faculty, the Writing Courses Questionnaire For Students, and sample student essays were utilized. These instruments have been used in different ways by the researcher. In this study, the questionnaires were used as an instrument for English professors and students to report their knowledge of the effectiveness of the current writing programs being

implemented at their institutions. The instrument was self-administered by the researcher. In addition, the researcher also utilized the questionnaires to conduct personal interviews with English faculty members and students at the selected institutions.

The Writing Courses' Questionnaire For Faculty consists of inquiries about the writing programs. The questions are structured to discover information such as, how many freshmen students register for writing courses each semester, and if the writing program being utilized is sufficiently serving the needs of the students. The data obtained provided the researcher with information to help examine the effectiveness of the writing programs at the Historically Black Colleges selected for this study.

The Writing Courses' Questionnaire For Students consists of inquiries about the writing programs at the selected Historically Black Colleges. The questions are structured to elicit information regarding the strengths and weaknesses that students believe they have with their own writing. The questions also explore student opinion about basic writing programs. Faculty and student feedback were the dependent variables. Data was obtained from faculty and students throughout the duration of this research.

Limitations

The study had the following limitations:

1. Although the questionnaires were completed anonymously, some students were reluctant to give information candidly in fear of their candid opinions being used against them.

2. Many of the selected Historically Black Colleges used in this study do not keep statistical information regarding the success rates of their writing programs and their students.
3. All of the writing classes at the selected Historically Black Colleges were not able to participate in this study due to time constraints.
4. The raw data from the statistical information was used to draw straightforward inferences for the study description. Rigorous statistical indices are not calculated in order to keep this research strictly a humanities study.

Population and Sampling Procedures

For the purposes of this study, the participating writing classes and faculty were randomly selected from the six selected Historically Black Colleges located in the southern region of the United States. The total number of participating faculty is sixty. Ten English faculty members from each college were selected to participate in the study. The participating faculty members were from different racial backgrounds, had various teaching experience, and differed in highest degree completed, age, sex, experience as a professor, and years at current college.

The total number of students who participated in this study is six hundred. Approximately one hundred students were selected from each college in their writing classes. All the students were African Americans, had various college experiences, and differed in grade point averages, age, sex, experience with writing courses, and years at current college.

Instruments

The Writing Courses' Questionnaire For Faculty, The Writing Courses' Questionnaire For Students, student essays, and personal interviews were used to measure faculty and student self-perceived opinion of the writing courses at their respective colleges. Various studies on remedial education influenced the researcher in the development of the Writing Course Questionnaires. One study in particular is the study that was done on remedial education in the California State University System. In this study, and under a policy adopted by California State trustees in 1996, entering freshmen must take placement exams to prove that they have mastered Basic English and math skills. Those who fall short of the standard are required to take one or two remedial classes in their area of academic weakness and must pass an examination to prove their competence within a year. More than half of 2002 incoming freshmen in the California State University System had to take at least one remedial class.

Campuses are required to dismiss freshmen who do not pass those classes unless the students can show extenuating circumstances. Now that campuses have had a few years to adjust to the new rules, the university system presidents "are administering those provisions much more seriously," states Allison G. Jones assistant vice chancellor for academic affairs for the California State University System.[4] "The message has gotten through to many students, who often say the fear of being dismissed from school is a powerful motivator. I have this semester to pass, so I am going to pass. No doubt about it," states Michelle Miller, an 18 year-old California State Long Beach freshman from Rosemead.[5]

According to figures released in an article entitled, "California; CSU Ousts 8.2% Over Weak Skills; Number of freshmen Kicked out For not Meeting English Standards is at New High," which appeared in *The Los Angeles Times*, January 29, 2003, the 8.2% dismissal rate from among the nearly 37,000 freshmen admitted in Fall 2001 was up from 6.7% the year before. The rate has climbed since California State started keeping such figures with the class that entered in Fall 1998, a group that had a rate of 5.1%. California State also released figures showing how well this year's 2003 entire freshman class is prepared for university work. Based on placement exams, 41% of the freshman class that entered in Fall 2002 was proficient in English, up from 38% the year before and up from 32% four years earlier. This remains far from the university's goal of having 90% of its new students able to pass this test by 2007 (Silverstein 72).

As a result of studies such as this, the researcher began studying specifically the effectiveness of writing courses at the Historically Black Colleges selected for this research. The student questionnaire really ignited stimulating conversation with students who then expressed how they sincerely felt about the writing instruction they received at their perspective colleges. Likewise, faculty members were intrigued by the questionnaire and the study. Most importantly, the student essays utilized in this research demonstrate the fact that there are many students who could benefit from remedial writing instruction.

Design of the Study and Outcomes

In this research design, faculty and student responses on the questionnaires were factorially analyzed. The factors of this instrument are creativity, organization, and

acceptance. The variables that were analyzed were college location, writing experience, need, and success. This analysis was significant because it determined the relevance of remedial writing instruction at Historically Black Colleges. This analysis and research vindicates the notion that if Historically Black Colleges accept students with remedial writing abilities, then the college has an obligation to its students to provide the correct type of learning environment.

This research indicates that a great number of the student respondents at the selected Historically Black Colleges find that their writing abilities are lacking. This study further indicates that out of the number of students who do have difficulty with writing, this group of students would be willing to take remedial writing classes if their colleges offered the courses. The participating students also acknowledge that a regular English 101 course often moves a bit too quickly for them. This group of students seems to be aware that they do not have strong writing skills but have never properly been offered a solution through a writing course.

It was also indicated from this research that many of the students who are currently receiving remedial writing instruction from Historically Black Colleges that offer remedial writing courses are satisfied with the instruction of the courses. This group of students is aware that their writing abilities are somewhat poor, that they welcome the extra attention, and the slower pace that they receive in their remedial writing courses.

Of the faculty members who participated in this research, many of them believe that students can benefit from remedial writing instruction. This study indicates that these faculty members support remedial education, but do not like the negative

connotation associated with the word "remedial." It is their belief that the word "remedial" operates in a detrimental way to one's self-esteem and self-worth. According to these educators, political correctness has caused people to steer clear of labels and terminology that may psychologically derail a person who deserves a foundational type of course.

These faculty members also believe that most of their English 101 courses are over-crowded, which inhibits effective writing instruction. They agree that in a smaller environment such as a remedial writing course, students who do have difficulty with writing can be attended to with more of a personal kind of instruction. Most of these English faculties have at least taught remedial writing in their careers; therefore, they are able to identify the vast difference in a course being taught with remedial instruction versus a course being taught as a Standard English 101 class. In the following chapters, the researcher presents a discussion of the policies and practices of selected Historically Black Colleges in the area of remediation and the development of effective writing skills for the basic writer. The actual study results of this research are presented in the concluding chapter, and the raw data collected from the survey are included in Appendix E.

NOTES

[1] Oracle Bones. Bones used for divination by the Chinese during the Shang Dynasty (traditionally c. 1766 B.C. – c. 1122 B.C.). Along with contemporary inscriptions on bronze vessels, these records of divination, which were incised on the shoulder blades of animals (mainly oxen) and on turtle shells, contain the earliest form of Chinese writing. For further information on oracle bone, see *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th edition, 2002.

[2] The National Association for Development Education initiated this report from the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) to date statistical information on the early emergence of remedial students at The University of Wisconsin.

[3] In the late 1980s the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) set the goal that, by the year 2000, 80 percent of all students entering college would be prepared for college level work. Their report indicated that more than 50 percent of African American students begin college needing at least one remedial course.

[4] Allison Jones. Allison G. Jones, Assistant Vice Chancellor at California State University System, was one of the universities officials interviewed for this study. The researcher is grateful for her participation in the study.

[5] Michelle Miller. Michelle Miller is an attending 18 year-old freshman in the California State University System used in this study.

CHAPTER II

WRITING AND REMEDIATION IN LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

The existence of the basic writer dates back in American history to the beginning of formal education in America. Since the start of the country's educational system, all students have not shared the same strengths in writing. Director of freshman writing at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), Mike Rose, in "The Language of Exclusion" describes some of the long standing laments in American colleges about students' lack of skills; such complaints were found even at Harvard in the 1870s (342). However, the highest visibility of the basic writer came into existence toward the end of the sixties when the Higher Education Act of 1965 provided increased funding, and open admission began. Many four-year colleges began admitting students who were not, by traditional standards, college material. Open admission policies were intended to open the doors to a larger population of students who otherwise would not have met the traditional standards of admission and therefore, might never have the opportunity to attend college.

However, when these open admission students arrived at college, one of the immediate tasks they faced was to write a placement essay and take a reading test. From the results of these tests, according to Mina Shaughnessy, a remedial education supporter and English professor, the students usually fell into three (3) categories:

1. Those who met the traditional requirements for college work. According to their tests, they were competent readers and writers. This first group is whom college teachers knew best.
2. Those who successfully completed their secondary education but did not excel exceptionally high. These students simply learned how to get by, but found no fun or challenge in writing. College teachers also knew this second group. They were stragglers, and sometimes slackers, but in any case, the teachers were still able to reach these students.
3. Those who had been left so far behind the others in their formal education that they appeared to have no chance at all. These students had difficulty with the written language that was of a different kind. In these students it was clear that the standards of high school literacy had not been met. This third group contained the students that were foreign to college teachers. The essays these students wrote stunned the teachers. Nothing, it seemed, was going to turn these students into writers. The English teachers believed that these students had writing problems that were irremediable. (2)

After many years of open admissions, educators became more cognizant of the individual differences found in all students' writing. Professors of English began to realize that not all students were prepared to follow the same type of curriculum, had access to the same reading material, nor did the same type of writing assignments at the same level of speed and aptitude. Although the professors noticed the differences in their student's writing, they simply did not know what to call the students who demonstrated poor writing

abilities. Consequently, the word "remedial" became known as the identifying word for students who did not show very much promise in writing.

The word "remedial" caught on like wild fire, and before long, it was a widely accepted word used in many English departments. In the 1960s, the term remedial seemed appropriate, as well as politically correct. However, by the 1970s, educators became uncomfortable with the word "remedial." It was suggested that "remedial" was not a pretty word that simply implied the need for a remedy, but broadcasted illness or deficiency. Supporters of this term change suggested that students felt insulted and jolted by the affront to their pride and self-image. In 1976, Mina Shaughnessy argued against the word remedial in "Basic Writing." She claimed that,

> The teaching of writing to severely under-prepared freshmen is as yet but a frontier of a profession, lacking even an agreed upon name. 'Remedial' writing is out of favor for good reasons: it seems inaccurate to speak of beginners, whether on the tennis court or in a writing class, as remedial and the students we are concerned with have generally had but token instruction in writing;. . . but worse, it is a soiled word with unhappy associations that go back to grade school, where many college remedial students began the losing game of 'catching up.' (137)

Shaughnessy saw the compelling need to eradicate the term "remedial," and hence, the term "basic writing" became widely known at the time of her writings in the 1970s. What English faculty had always referred to as "remedial writing" was suddenly renamed "basic writing." The term "basic writing" helped to usher in a national enthusiasm for meeting the needs of under prepared students. The new term inspired research as well as

renewed interest in English professors teaching students who have interests but weak writing skills.

The term basic writing became popular probably because of its appeal to our humanistic impulses. Basic has less negative connotations, and it sounds less condescending. In addition, the term seemed to fit in because college curricula offer many basic introductory courses in diverse areas, such as biology and psychology. The issue of definition is still a problem. Nonetheless, some might ask, who is the basic writer? Since writing is subjective rather than objective, a student who might be classified as a basic writer at one university may be considered a candidate for English 101 at another university. In *Errors and Expectations*, Mina Shaughnessy calls basic writers "beginners," and according to her, "Basic writing students write the way they do, not because they are slow or non-verbal, indifferent or incapable of academic excellence, but because they are beginners and must like all beginners, learn by making mistakes" (5).

In understanding whom the basic writer is, it must also be noted that mere stereotypes and generalizations cannot be used in any productive sense in defining the basic writer. Basic writers are classified as such for various reasons. Some basic writers are planners, others are not; some excel with open-ended topics, some do not; some are insightful, some are not; and so on. The point is, not all-basic writing students have the same problem, and not all students with the same or similar problems have them for the same reasons. Furthermore, a student's difficulty with writing is by no means a sign of his intelligence or lack thereof. "Basic" does not mean simple, childlike, or dumb. Basic writers are not writers who simply need to learn to use or speak English at a level

appropriate to college education. They must be writers who need to learn to command language, especially Standard English--the language of written academic discourse.

The Psychological Dimension of Writing

Many freshman students learn when they enter college that they are "basic writers" because for the first time in their educational experiences they receive negative commentary from their English instructors on their essays. College English teachers hear quite often, remarks such as, "I don't understand why I am in this remedial writing class. I made A's in English in high school." These kinds of remarks from new college students raise other concerns such as, what are students learning about writing before college, and how are these students graduating from high school? No matter what the answers may be, the fact still remains that basic writers are entering colleges and universities in droves when in fact, they are unprepared or under prepared for the challenges of college-level writing.

Now, just as there are students entering college and learning for the first time that they are basic writers, there are those students who have known for quite some time prior to college, that their writing skills are poor or not up to par to college writing. For these students, writing has become a great burden. These students have grown accustomed to the negative comments from their English teachers on their essays as part of "teacher behavior," not as a challenge for them to improve their writing skills. Students with a history of poor writing skills anticipate negativity from their teachers, and therefore, writing becomes psychological. Remedial education advocate David Bartholomae, claims that,

> The BW student both resents and resists his vulnerability as a writer. He is aware that he leaves a trail of errors behind him when he writes. He can usually think of little else while he is writing. But he doesn't know what to do about it. Writing puts him on a line, and he doesn't want to be there. For every three hundred words he writes, he is likely to use from ten to thirty forms that the academic reader regards as serious errors. (135)

Eventually, the basic writer convinces himself that he is incapable of writing, and closes himself off to learning. In turn, he accepts defeat. Often, for the basic writer, because his inability to write is internalized and somewhat psychological, he believes his poor writing skills is an indicator of his intelligence. If a student such as this is placed in a Standard English 101 course, he will most likely not seek help in an attempt not to draw further attention to himself. As a result, this student slowly, and silently, falls by the wayside.

Around 1980, cognitive psychologists showed interest in the writing process. Since this time a shift in focus on studies of writing can be observed, from studies in effective learning and teaching environment to the cognitive processes of writing. Cognitive psychologist Gert Rijaarsdam suggests:

> Cognitive psychology not only includes intricate theories and experimentation on speech production, speech comprehension, reading comprehension, and memory, it also includes detailed work on higher-order thinking processes such as problem solving, reasoning, and decision making. Now, it has become more obvious that a complete psychological account of thinking and language must surely include written composition. (374)

A similar theory to Rijaarsdam's is shared in *The Psychology of Writing*, where psychologist Ronald T. Kellogg argues:

> Writing involves creating and organizing ideas and setting goals to achieve during composition, such as choosing an appropriate tone for a given audience. Planning typically occurs in the mental domain of personal symbols. A writer might sit staring blankly into space, looking almost catatonic, while personal symbols are created and organized. The nature of these personal symbols can range from images and abstract ideas to trial sentences or pre-text held in the mind's eye for inspection. Writers may also externalize their plans on paper, using consensual symbols but with the intent to communicate only with themselves, not with an audience. The final step in recording invokes a complete translation of personal symbols, as the writer attempts to communicate with an audience through formal prose. (28)

Essentially, Kellogg suggests that writing, due to its psychological nature, depends on the process of collecting knowledge, planning ideas, translating ideas into text, and then reviewing ideas and text. During the writing process, the basic writer may wonder if his sentences convey his intent. In reviewing their essays, basic writer may try to adopt the potential reader's point of view. This entire process can result in anxiety for the basic writer, which may give the appearance of poor idea generation in the final product. The paragraph below demonstrates an example of a student essay after 60 minutes of writing. The assignment is to write an informative essay in which the students explain how to do something.

> People around me always tell me that my girlfriend an I make good couple, how can they know, why they tell us that. I saw many couples that look to be happy and with no problems, but suddenly they break up, or I see one of them hanging out with other person. Relationship between couple, is something really difficult to keep in good status because sometimes their will be discussions and misunderstandings. [1]

Now, to an educator, it seems almost unbelievable that a student would spend one hour on an in-class assignment and only have written barely one paragraph, let alone an entire essay. However, for the student, this assignment was intimidating. This particular student spent most of his hour rewriting his three sentences, reorganizing his thoughts, being concerned with correctness, afraid of error, being frustrated, and ultimately giving up. On the issue of how students can be paralyzed by fear, Mina Shaughnessy, also points out that,

> Some writers, inhibited by their fear of error, produce a few lines an hour or keep trying to begin, crossing out one try after another until the sentences are hopelessly tangled. Much about the "remedial" situation encourages this obsession with error. First, there is the reality of academia, the fact that most English 101 teachers have little tolerance for the kinds of errors BW students make, that they perceive certain types of errors as indicators of ineducability, and they have the power of the F. Second, there is the urgency of the students to meet their teachers' criteria, even to request more of the prescriptive teaching they have had before in the hope that this time it might 'take.' (9)

The fact of the matter is that until the basic writer becomes more comfortable with his writing through careful instruction, he will continue to have great anxiety each time he is asked to write an essay. Writing is a cognitive part learning. Creating meaning through the use of words is a part of human activity. The making of meaning in written discourse is a defining part of our species, and the study of writing offers a view through the core of thinking and writing.

Opposing Views on Basic Writing Programs

Opposers of remedial programs view the basic writer as a waste of time. They acknowledge that the basic writer does in fact exist, however, they argue that the cost of maintaining remedial programs is too great. In New York, for example, the spring of 1999 brought the decision of the trustees of the City University of New York (CUNY) to phase out remedial education at CUNY's ten four-year colleges and thus deny admission to most of the students who need it. According to former New York City Mayor, Rudolph Giuliani,

> Widespread remediation is both costly and damaging to academic standards – worse, it suffers from a fatal lack of logic. Four-year institutions are not supposed to be in the business of teaching students to read or master high school math. They also assume that remedial courses in college are a new and rapidly growing phenomenon, which could be eliminated by forcing high schools to provide better preparation and make their students work harder. [2]

What former Mayor Giuliani fails to realize is that what is "damaging to academic standards" is a country producing students who are incapable of coherently writing,

which in turn renders these impotent writers "a waste of time" in the work force with useless degrees. In the article "The End of the Second Chance," which appeared in *The American Prospect,* dated May/June 1999, author Peter Schrag points out that,

> The trustees' decision received intense political pressure from Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and, indirectly, from Governor George Pataki. According to the decision, in the fall of 1999, remediation for most students was to be phased out at CUNY four-year colleges, and any student who could not pass CUNY's placement tests in math, reading, or composition would have to start their post-secondary education somewhere else. In effect, the placement tests would become an admission exam. Only those students who are not native English speakers and those who received their secondary education abroad would be excepted. (68)

A decision such as this omits the basic writer completely from attending any four-year college. If the basic writer chooses to go to college, then his only choice is a two-year college. New York is not the only state that is trying to rid itself of remedial programs.

California has similar remedial statistics as New York. Roughly, half of the entering freshmen at California State University, the mid-range California State University system that admits those presumed to be in the top third of their high school classes, have to take remedial courses either in English or in math, and often in both. At some California State University campuses with large minority enrollments, such as Dominguez Hills in Los Angeles, over 80 % of entering freshmen require remedial work. Peter Schrag argues that, "Four years ago, the California State University trustees voted to phase out remediation in that system, though after heated protests from minority

groups they gave themselves almost a decade to do it" (72). The trustees believe, as Mayor Giuliani did, that if the high schools were doing their job, remediation should hardly be needed at all. Consequently though, the number of students required to take remedial courses at California State University has been going up, not down.

Unfortunately, however, a large number of community colleges do not want the burden of dealing with remedial students either. As a result, the proverbial "buck" is being passed, and the remedial students are paying the price. Community colleges already have the image of being a last resort for many students. They go there because they cannot go anywhere else. Community colleges look to point the finger back to high schools. In 1996, Lloyd Hackley, the chairman of the White House initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, observed:

> If you pile up all those kinds of folks in community colleges where they are having to teach them basic cognitive skills at the same time that they are trying to teach them technical skills, it's a load that overburdens community colleges. Remediation is very expensive in terms of money and time and human loss. That is because the assumption is that remediation can make up for all the academic sins created from kindergarten through 12th grade. There has to be a limit as to what remediation can do. Each year there should be fewer students coming out of any schools that require remediation. We are going to have remediation forever, but we are trying to reduce the cost of it and hold people accountable who are creating it. We need to say: "Last year you sent us 100 students who needed remediation, coming right out of your high school. You gave them diplomas. They graduated and they are eligible

> to go to college with their GPA. Next year, if you send us another 100 who need remediation, we are firing you. (25)

The problem with this notion from Dr. Hackley, and opposers who share his ideology, is that "firing" high school faculty for graduating remedial students is not going to resolve the simple fact that remedial students--more specifically, basic writers-- still exist. They are not going to simply go away because their teachers are fired or their presence is ignored.

It has even been suggested by California Educator John Borba in an article that appeared in the Spring 2001 edition of *College Teaching*, that undergraduate remediation needs can be reduced, and possibly even eliminated, through increased commitment of universities to community service in the United States. This would be accomplished by a reformation of the retention, promotion and tenure criteria for faculty members. Borba urges universities and colleges to attack the problem of freshman remediation with multi-faceted strategies, activities, programs, and projects. One particular strategy that Borba discusses is the Mentor Professors Strategy. According to this strategy,

> Three major groups of students need increased university support: (a) second language students striving for oral and written proficiency in English; (b) identifiable minority students who must fight stereotypes; and (c) female students who must fight similar stereotypes that result in pre-imposed limitations. Mentor professors can regularly provide guidance, counseling, and academic support to needy students who seek education beyond high school. Mentors can strengthen each student's commitment to attending a four-year college or university. The mentor professor concept is an exciting

> one that can serve several important purposes. Properly implemented, mentor professor programs can give students direct role and behavioral models. They can also provide direct services to schools, reduce or even eliminate the need for undergraduate remediation, and serve as a collaborative model for others. (43)

As immediate as the feasibility of this program sounds, the program itself still raises some pertinent questions such as, what happens to a faculty member's involvement in such a program after he is promoted or has made tenure? Would a faculty member still be required to participate? Would faculty members even want to still participate? Although Borba's solution to the remediation problem does sound appealing, a basic writing student needs an English teacher who is committed to his needs out of sincerity, and not what he seeks to gain professionally. Again, masking the issue of the basic writing student will not cause the issue to disappear.

The question then returns to, if not a four-year college, then where? If not a community college, then where? If not English professors, then whom? The crusade to save remedial writing programs should, if no other place, exist at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and where these programs are nonexistent, they should be implemented, not as a matter of convenience but as a matter of necessity.

Historical Overview of Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Part of the premise behind the origin of Historically Black Colleges and Universities was to provide quality collegiate education to African Americans who

otherwise would not have had an opportunity to attend college due to discrimination. The Historically Black Colleges were established wherever large African American populations resided, such as in the Southeast, Southwest, and in the Northeast. Most people who are familiar with the nation's historically black institutions understand that public and private institutions are included in this mixture. Following the end of the Civil War in 1865, the southern states were required by federal law to provide public education for all of their citizens. Southern legislators complied with the law, but in order to maintain their legacy of segregation between African Americans and Whites, they also started a "separate but equal" system of public universities. The Historically Black Colleges were not designed to succeed; rather they were established to appease black people or to serve as "holding institutions" so that black students would not matriculate in historically white colleges and universities.

Under the "separate but equal" system of education, some students at Historically Black Colleges did show evidence of problematic writing, however with an open admissions policy for all blacks, ignoring the basic writer was the lesser of two evils. African Americans were already separated by not being allowed to attend white colleges, and separating African Americans amongst themselves in terms of their writing abilities was too great a task, and too damaging at the time. When integration started, it started first with athletes. Athletes went to black colleges, not as a conduit to professional ranks, but as a way of paying their way through college. The traditionally white schools did not recruit those who could not be professional athletes.

Eventually, the nation's 17 historically black, land-grant institutions were created and founded in 1890. These schools are:

1. Alabama A&M University
2. The University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff
3. Delaware State College
4. Florida A&M University
5. Fort Valley State College
6. Kentucky State University
7. Southern University-Baton Rouge
8. University of Maryland-Eastern Shore
9. Alcorn State University
10. Lincoln University
11. North Carolina A&T State University
12. Langston University
13. South Carolina State University
14. Tennessee State University
15. Prairie View A&M University
16. Virginia State University
17. West Virginia State College

For the most part, all of these schools have an open admissions policy; therefore, the chance of these Historically Black Colleges and Universities having basic writing students in their population is great. In addition to sharing a common history, these land-grant schools are all four-year institutions.

There are 21 additional four-year public colleges and universities that are recognized by the federal government as historically black institutions. As with the land-

grant schools, these institutions were founded to serve African Americans. They came into existence after the 1890 land-grant schools and prior to the signing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The remaining 38 public colleges and universities that serve predominantly African-American student populations are either two-year institutions or four-year schools founded after the Corrective Measures Implementation (CMI) Rights Act, an act which shapes how people are recruited, evaluated and selected, and also provides litigation support. Lastly, there is Howard University, which was founded and maintained as a private institution, but has been sustained with a substantial federal subsidy. There are 40 other private institutions that the federal government recognizes as Historically Black Colleges and Universities. In all, there are 104 Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities have a responsibility to basic writers since most of them openly admit them. When recruiters of Historically Black Colleges and Universities visit high schools, they do not make a distinction between college level writers and non-college level writers. Recruiters encourage all students at the particular high schools they visit to apply. In addition, recruiters do not indicate that if potential students have difficulty with writing, provisions will be made for them to succeed in their writing. They do not do this because most HBCUs have open admissions policies and, sad to say, an alarming number of Historically Black Colleges and Universities do not have any academic provisions for basic writers.

Howard University, for instance, is a prominent Historically Black College that has an open admissions policy. Students who plan to enroll at Howard University must complete and submit the following:

(1) Application for Admission

(2) Non-refundable $45 application fee

(3) Official high school transcript or GED certificate

(4) Results from the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Test Assessment (ACT)

(5) One letter of recommendation from a high school teacher

(6) Scholarship application and essay

(7) Admission essay

(8) Resume

(9) Application acknowledgement card

Howard University does not require a particular SAT or ACT score, but oddly enough the University does require a writing sample that is not utilized at all in any type of placement for writing courses. In short, Howard University does not support remedial education because basic writing courses are not offered, and although the basic writer is permitted to apply, once he arrives on Howard University's campus, he is ignored.

Stillman College is another example of a prominent Historically Black College with an open admission policy. Stillman College claims in their admission policy that, "the College desires to help every student who wants a college education to realize his/her potential."[3] Yet, Stillman College does not support remedial writing courses for students that require them. Prospective students of Stillman College are expected to adhere to the following procedures for admission:

(1) Complete an application

(2) Pay a non-refundable application fee of $25

(3) Request all official transcripts from all prior institutions or high schools attended and send to Admissions Office

(4) Submit an official ACT or SAT test score

Again, an open admission policy is evidence that more than likely, basic writing students are attending Stillman College and are being left to their own devices to somehow pass English 101.

Dillard University, as a last example, follows an open admission policy. Students wishing to apply to Dillard University must submit the following:

(1) A preliminary high school transcript, or a General Education Diploma with a score of at least 45

(2) Results of the SAT or ACT examinations

(3) Recommendations from a high school counselor, or high school teacher, and

(4) A completed application and

(5) Payment of a non-refundable fee of $45 dollars.

Like Stillman College and Howard University, Dillard University does not mention in its admission policy what academic assistance is available for basic writing student. It is clear that Dillard University places emphasis on writing, because all students intending to graduate must pass an exit writing examination. An exit examination can prove to be intimidating as well as disastrous for a basic writing student whose academic needs have not been met. Unfortunately for basic writers, Howard University, Stillman College, and Dillard University are only three examples of Historically Black Colleges failing to acknowledge the need for basic writing instruction. There are several other Historically

Black Colleges and Universities that ignore the plight of the basic writer, and issues such as this research will be examined in more detail in following chapters.

Although it is true that Historically Black Colleges and Universities make up only a mere 15% of all the colleges in America, however, Black institutions produce 30% of all the African-Americans holding bachelor degrees in America. HBCUs are also the source of nearly 50% of all African Americans who go on to graduate school. Historically Black Colleges and Universities do have a wide range of supporters who respect the role these colleges and universities have played in the lives of countless African Americans. Although these institutions have their supporters, there are also those who have formed their own prejudices towards the institutions. In 1996, the White House report on Historically Black Colleges and Universities praised Historically Black Colleges and Universities for the value they bring to education. However, despite the recognition, Historically Black Colleges and Universities still have to justify themselves and what they are doing. Lloyd Hackley reports that,

> Attitudes that some people have towards historically Black colleges cannot be separated from the attitudes that they have towards minorities generally. And while we certainly have opened up avenues for Blacks and minorities to go through certain educational channels other than historically Black colleges, there is still a monumental role historically Black colleges have to play for a great number of people aside from educating them formally. (24)

The negative opinions that some have formed against HBCUs do not necessarily negate the fact that these institutions are needed. Many African-American youth of today still look towards these institutions of higher learning for their college opportunities and

ultimately for their career goals or professional enhancement. If the premise behind establishing these schools was to give African Americans every possible opportunity to succeed in life with a college education, shouldn't the reason for implementing and maintaining basic writing programs at Historically Black Colleges be similar? Many African-American College freshmen struggle with writing each year and for that reason Historically Black Colleges and Universities have an obligation to these struggling students to teach them how to become stronger writers. Passing these struggling composition students with grades of "Cs" and "Ds" does a great disservice to African-American students. Kenneth Ma, in an April 1999 article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* claims:

> Attacks on affirmative action, along with policies that restrict remedial classes, are limiting African-American students' access to higher education. Colleges are raising admissions standards and are eliminating remedial programs at four-year colleges in ways that will disproportionately affect blacks. When this is done, the black youngsters are going to have problems. Attempts to raise standards assume that black Americans have had the same educational opportunities as other races before college. When one is behind in a race, particularly if one is African-American, then one must run faster than those that are ahead, just to simply catch up (40).

It would seem therefore that most Historically Black Colleges and Universities have managed to exceed even their own expectations in terms of their longevity, graduation rates and success rates of graduates. Clearly these institutions are performing a noble role in American academia. Historically Black Colleges and Universities have taken a

large number of students who have minimal ACT or SAT scores and little money and have taken the noble responsibility of giving these students an opportunity to attend college and be as competitive as anyone else when they graduate. Many graduates of Historically Black Colleges and Universities have become outstanding lawyers, doctors, judges, engineers, teachers, scientists, architects, artists, musicians, etc.

However, Historically Black Colleges and Universities that intend to thrive in the twenty-first century must graduate competent students with writing skills that meet college level standards. If the deficiency in African-American students' writing is not addressed, it will never be eradicated. In fact, ignoring the problem only creates in the struggling African-American student, a false sense of ability and accomplishment. This student will graduate from college believing that he knows how to write, and will probably not learn otherwise, until he attends graduate school where he will hear from his professors for the first time, "Your writing is very weak." The simple solution to this problem is to implement effective basic writing programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

NOTES

[1] This sample essay was collected by the writer in a writing class in May, 2001.

[2] Rudolph Giuliani. Guiliani is the former Mayor of New York City and opposer of remedial education. Giuiliani was instrumental in removing remedial courses from the City Universities in New York.

[3] Stillman College, *2001-2003 College Catalog.*

CHAPTER III

SELECTED HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES OPPOSED TO REMEDIATION

Spelman College

Founded in 1881, Spelman College is one of the nation's most reputable colleges for women.[1] It was founded by Sophia B. Packard and Harriet E. Giles, who were commissioned in 1879 by the Women's American Baptist Home Mission Society to study the living conditions among the freedmen of the South. The two women were appalled by the lack of educational opportunity for black women, so they returned to Boston determined to make a change. On April 11, 1881, they opened a school in the basement of Atlanta's Friendship Baptist Church with $100 provided by the congregation of the First Baptist Church of Medford, Massachusetts. The first 11 pupils, ten women and one girl, were mostly ex-slaves who were determined to learn to read the Bible and write.

In February 1883, the school relocated to its new nine-acre site, which included five frame buildings with both classroom and residence hall space. As enrollment steadily increased, the normal school curriculum was expanded to include sewing, cooking, millinery, and other preeminently practical subjects. John D. Rockefeller donated funds for a magnificent $40,000 brick building, the first major construction on the Spelman campus. In 1887, Rockefeller Hall, named for its donor, was succeeded by

another major building, Packard Hall. Completed in 1888, the building was dedicated to the work, vision, and self-sacrifice of Sophia Packard. In 1888, a state charter for the school was granted and the Board of Trustees officially expressed its gratitude by appointing Miss Packard as Spelman's first president.

During the first 10 years, the school flourished with 800 pupils, 30 teachers, and property valued at $90,000. Harriet E. Giles succeeded Sophia Packard and served as president of Spelman for the next 18 years. The institution conferred its first college degrees in 1901 and celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1906 as an institution that had filled a spectrum of needs for thousands of Black women from grade school through college. Several years later, Spelman College offered majors in 26 fields as well as special pre-law and pre-medical sequences. Counseling programs and placement services helped students to find graduate or professional schools or job opportunities most suited to their talents and training. On April 11, 1981, Spelman College celebrated a full century of service to African-American women.

The criterion for admission to Spelman College[2] requires that a candidate must have 15 or more units (grades 9-12), with at least 12 units in academic subjects. All applicants must take either the Scholastics Aptitude Test I (SATI) or the American College Test (ACT). Spelman will waive test requirements for transfer students who have completed at least one year (30 semester hours) of full-time study at an accredited college or university. Spelman admits first-year and transfer students for the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science Degree programs. Additional minimal requirements include a minimum average of "C" or better in academic subjects. Specific minimum

course requirements include four (4) units of English, two (2) units of science (one lab), two (2) units of foreign language, and two (2) units of mathematics.

The Department of English at Spelman College aims to provide all students with opportunities to enhance their communication skills and critical thinking skills. According to the English Department's objectives, a student who has successfully completed courses in the department will be able to:

1. Demonstrate critical thinking, especially to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas and texts;
2. Perform research (e.g., to identify, analyze, present, and document source material on basic topics of literary, social, or scientific concerns);
3. Understand and describe the role of literature in the development of both Western and non-Western cultures and recognize the way values are embodied in these literatures;
4. Examine the representations of women, especially Black women, depicted in literature;
5. Propose and support interpretations of a wide range of literature in English, with an understanding of formalist techniques, historical contexts and literary tradition; and
6. Demonstrate knowledge of the history, development, and structure of the language.

Spelman College has a rich history and an excellent reputation and there is no doubt that the College is dedicated to excellence in higher education. However, with all of the good intentions that Spelman College has, it does not offer any remedial writing

courses. The justification for this is that Spelman seeks to admit academically talented students with a demonstrated commitment to academic excellence. This admission objective is corroborated by the statistics for the 2001 class profile which are rather impressive.[3] Currently, there are approximately 2,000 students enrolled at Spelman College. The average SAT score is 1103, the middle 50% SAT is 1070-1250, the average ACT is 23, and the average GPA is 3.4. Candidates for admission into Spelman College are generally in the top 1% or 2% of their class. Spelman feels that because the students they attract are creme de la creme, then it would be a contradiction to have remedial writing classes. However, to date, there really is no credible any research that suggests that a high SAT score indicates mastery of writing on a college level. Therefore, a basic writing program at Spelman College would not be a contradiction of the high quality of students they recruit. On the contrary, a basic writing program would enhance the learning process for students whose writing skills may need rhetorical augmentation – that is exposure to different rhetorical modes with emphasis on appropriate language usage.

At most colleges, freshman students are required to take one year of English composition courses generally known as English 101 and English 102. However, at Spelman College, students are only required to take one semester of English composition course English 103, First-Year Composition. The course is designed to provide opportunities for the student to develop and exercise critical thinking primarily through writing and research. The emphasis in the course is on comparison/contrast, argumentation, and working with sources. A student must earn at least a "C" to pass the

course. According to Dr. Nicholas Mauriello, Assistant Professor of English and Director of the Comprehensive Writing Program,

> It is very rare that remedial students are seen at Spelman because our bar is much higher than other colleges. Remediation is not needed at Spelman, but we could implement another writing course. There should be a second semester of research writing. ENG 103 is not enough. Basically, argumentative writing is covered. [4]

Though it is true that currently, Spelman College does not have any remedial writing courses, this was not the case during the 1960s-1980s. During this time, Spelman offered students who were lacking strong writing skills a remedial writing course. This course known as English 010, Basic Writing, generally had 16-20 students, and was taught by faculty from the English Department. Some time during the early 1990s, Spelman College embarked upon a self-study, at which time it was determined that the English 010 course would be terminated. Dr. Anne B. Warner, Associate Professor of English and longtime faculty member at Spelman, claims that the decision to abort the course was due to the following:

1. Placement was not done accurately enough;
2. It could not be determined if the remedial course helped students;
3. It was feared that remedial courses attacked student's self esteem;
4. There were too many complaints from parents; and
5. Placement essays were too labor intensive for faculty. [5]

At relatively the same time that the English Department at Spelman decided to eradicate Basic Writing, they also decided to streamline the entire curriculum. The college

believed that students had too many courses to take, so they terminated some courses and changed from three (3) semester credit hours to four (4) semester credit hours. This gave students a total of 120 semester hours for graduation. This was also the time when Spelman raised the bar for admission, and so the caliber of student was different, and so were SAT scores. However, according to Dr. Anne B. Warner, Associate Professor of English at Spelman, "One semester of writing is not enough at Spelman simply because most students are not experienced enough." [6]

Spelman however, offers students a writing center. What probably immediately comes to mind when one thinks about a writing center is the notion that the center is structured to facilitate the needs of any student struggling with his or her writing skills. This is not entirely the case at Spelman. Because every department at Spelman is required to have at least one class that is writing intensive, the Writing Center functions to give writing instruction across the curriculum and serves as the focus of the campus. It is a resource center open to all members of the Spelman community. The Comprehensive Writing Program (CWP) that the Writing Center houses concerns itself with the ways in which students' writing and communication skills factor into the larger educational process. Therefore, the program provides writing tutorial services to students in all majors. At the same time, it provides faculty with information about recent developments in writing theory, technologies, and instruction.

The Comprehensive Writing Program is also dedicated to providing the most current technology-based resources for students and faculty. The Writing Center at Spelman is equipped with both IBM PC computers and Power Macintosh computers, available for student use on academic projects. The computers include software

programs that invoke ideas, use educational multimedia, and provide grammar and spelling assistance.[7] The Writing Center staff consists of Dr. Nicholas Mauriello, Director; Elaine Tassy, Assistant Director; and Mr. Dan Bascelli, Multimedia Coordinator.

It is true that Spelman has a state of the art Writing Center, many competent students and a good number of impressive faculty. However, despite all of the brilliance and distinction, the basic writer surely exists somewhere on Spelman's campus. According to Dr. Christine Sizemore, Professor of English at Spelman, "There are some students that are not progressing in our ENG 103 course, but with the writing intensive courses that they have taken in other departments, this helps the students." [8] Unfortunately, though, for the basic writer, this may not necessarily be true, and somewhere on Spelman's campus is a number of neglected basic writers searching for the right answers and approaches for their writing. As previously mentioned, a high SAT score by a student does not mean that the student will excel in writing.

Morehouse College

Morehouse College began as Augusta Institute in 1867,[9] and was established in the basement of Springfield Baptist Church in Augusta, Georgia, the oldest independent African-American church in the United States. The school's primary purpose at the time was to prepare black men for the ministry and for teaching. Today, Morehouse College, is a 61-acre campus in Atlanta.

Morehouse College was founded by Reverend William Jefferson White, an Augusta Baptist minister and cabinetmaker, with the support of Richard C. Coulter, a

former slave from Augusta, Georgia, and Reverend Edmund Turney, organizer of the National Theological Institute for educating freedmen in Washington, D.C.

In 1879, Augusta Institute moved to the basement of Friendship Baptist Church in Atlanta and changed its name to Atlanta Baptist Seminary. In 1885, the institution relocated to its current site in Atlanta's West End community. The academic offerings soon increased under the leadership of Morehouse's first African-American president, Dr. John Hope. Morehouse already had a reputation of preparing African Americans for teaching and the ministry, but it later expanded its curriculum and established the tradition of educating leaders for all areas of life. The school assumed its present name in honor of Henry L. Morehouse, the corresponding secretary of the Atlanta Baptist Home Mission Society.

During the presidency of Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, a renowned educator and mentor to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the number of faculty members grew and the percentage holding doctoral degrees increased from 8 to 25. Morehouse College earned global recognition as scholars from other countries joined the faculty, an increasing number of international students enrolled, and the fellowships and scholarships for study abroad became available. It received full accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 1957.

Morehouse expanded its dual-degree program in engineering with Georgia Institute of Technology to include other institutions and majors; launched the Center for Excellence in Science, Engineering and Mathematics with a $6.5 million U.S. Department of Defense grant; and established a new African-American Studies Program. The Department of Economics and Business Administration earned accreditation from

the American Association of Schools and Colleges of Business. Morehouse recently celebrated 132 years of producing outstanding men and extraordinary leaders.

Several factors are taken into consideration during the admissions process to Morehouse College. According to the Admissions catalog, "Each candidate is viewed on an individual basis." (27) [10] Of value are a student's secondary school preparation, which should include four (4) units in English, three (3) units in Mathematics, two (2) units in Natural Sciences, and two (2) units in Social Sciences. Two (2) units of foreign language are also recommended, to be included in the preparation for entering students. Students are expected to pursue additional study in academic subjects according to individual interests. Students who present strong academic records with a "B" or better average (85 or better on 100 point scale) and tests scores of at least 1000 on the SAT or 22 on the ACT have the best chance for admission to Morehouse.

The mission of the English Department clearly states that a properly educated Morehouse student, trained through the medium of English, should read, write, speak, listen, and reason with above-average skills and should understand and appreciate the ways human beings express themselves and their culture through literature and other arts. One goal of the Department of English is to provide instruction leading to the acquisition and development of appropriate language and literacy; skills the Department also claims to emphasize the development of proficiency in writing. It is stated in Morehouse College's mission[11] that the College prepares its students for leadership and service through instructional programs and extra-curricular activities that develop skills in oral and written communications, analytical and critical thinking.

Currently, Morehouse College does not offer any remedial courses in writing, although, as recently as two years ago, remedial writing courses were offered in the English Department, and on the basis of their competency students were placed in one of five (5) courses:

1. Basic Writing
2. Developmental Writing
3. English 101
4. Advanced English 101
5. Honors English 101

The termination of remedial courses ended the Basic Writing and Developmental Writing courses. According to Morehouse English Department Chair, Dr. Delores Stephens, the department aborted their remedial writing courses because "they wish to accomplish in 4 hours and one semester what it would take a student one to two semesters to complete."[12] Students who were being placed in the Basic and Developmental writing courses were disgruntled, and did not like the fact that they did not receive college credit for the remedial courses. Furthermore, the remedial students did not like the idea that it took them one to two semesters to get to English 101. Essentially, the English Department grew tired of the high volume of complaints from its remedial students.

Morehouse freshmen still take a placement examination, and based on the results from the placement examination, students take either: English 101-102, English 103, or English 103 Honors. The course catalog indicates that English 101-102 is a two semester, freshman-level sequence in which enrollment is based on strong placement scores upon admission to the College so that writing and analytical skills are enhanced

through extensive work in expository, argumentative, and documented essays. Activities allow exploration of a variety of perspectives in different disciplines and cultures, with an emphasis on works by African-American authors. A grade of "C" or above is required in each course for successful completion of this sequence.

Morehouse students who appear to have weaker placement test scores are still permitted to register for English 101-102; however, they must also register for English 200, which is The Writing Skills Laboratory. These students, in addition to taking English 101-102, are required to spend an additional hour each week in the computer lab, and receive tutor-assisted instruction. They must successfully complete each component before advancement to English 102. Students registered for the Writing Lab must pass the lab portion of the course in order to successfully pass English 101 and progress to English 102.

Of course, it may appear that with the recent establishment of the Writing Lab, that Morehouse seemingly caters to the needs of its basic writing students but this is not necessarily the case. As stated before, it is simply not practical to assume that the needs of a basic writing student can be addressed in a course that is not designed for him. A basic writer is someone who is already intimidated by writing, and when he is placed in a class that has 25-30 students, his insecurities about writing may increase, and he may also retreat into a form of psychological hibernation where he keeps his writing problems to himself because he is too afraid or intimidated to seek help.

Although Morehouse has a writing lab, the way the writing lab is structured does not effectively meet the needs of the basic writer. One hour per week in a writing lab where the student may or may not get attention from a writing instructor is terribly

inadequate. Furthermore, the writing instructor, who is responsible for Morehouse's writing lab, is currently part-time. Should this suggest that the remedial students who attend the writing lab are expected to receive part-time service? Who is responsible for the students in the instructor's absence? Quite often, in Morehouse's writing lab, it appears that students are simply sitting at computers alone trying to do their best by themselves. A college has to do more than just say "we have a writing lab," instead an effective basic writing program, in addition to a writing lab, would benefit many students tremendously.

Tougaloo College

According to the history of Tougaloo College, in 1869 the American Missionary Association of New York purchased a plantation of five hundred acres of land near Jackson, Mississippi, and established on it a school for the training of young people "irrespective of religious tenets, and conducted on the most liberal principles for the benefit of our citizens in general."[13] In 1871, the Legislature of the State of Mississippi granted the institution a charter under the name of "Tougaloo University." The Normal Department, which was a part of Tougaloo College, was recognized as a teacher training school until 1892 when the college ceased to receive aid from the state. Courses for college credit were first offered in 1897, and the first Bachelor of Arts degree was granted in 1901. In 1916, the name of the institution was changed to Tougaloo College.

Six years after Tougaloo's founding, the Home Missionary Society of the Disciples of Christ obtained a charter from the Mississippi State Legislature to establish a school at Edwards, Mississippi, to be known as Southern Christian Institute. As the two

schools had similar ideals and objectives, the supporting denominations completed the merger of the institutions in 1954, changing the name of the institution to Tougaloo Southern Christian College. The new college combined the resources of the two supporting bodies and renewed its dedication to the educational advancement of its students and the improvement of race relations in Mississippi.

The faculty and the administration challenged students to be prepared to take advantage of the opportunities available in the changing south and throughout the nation. The alumni bodies of the two institutions united to become the National Alumni Association of Tougaloo Southern Christian College. In 1962, by a vote of the Board of Trustees, and with the agreement of the supporting bodies, the name was changed again to Tougaloo College. As a small historically black, private, coeducational institution, Tougaloo has won national respect for its high academic standards and its level of social commitment. The college reached its ultimate in social commitment during the turbulent years of the 1960s, when it stood in the forefront of the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi, serving in the vanguard of peaceful demonstrations calculated to end segregation in the state, and also serving as being a haven for Civil Rights workers.

Today, Tougaloo College still opens its doors to many African Americans desiring to receive a quality college education. However, the English Department at Tougaloo College, like those of Spelman and Morehouse, does not have basic writing courses. According to the general education requirements listed in the Tougaloo College Catalog, students are required to take one year of English composition. They can take ENG 101 and ENG 102, or if the student qualifies as an honor student, he may take ENG 103 and ENG 104. ENG 101-102 (Effective Writing) students take this course for one

year and study oral and written expression. In English 101, students review grammar, mechanics, and paragraph development and engage in vocabulary building. During English 102, students write multiparagraph essays and document papers based on research. A grade of "C" or better is required to pass each of these courses. ENG 103-104 (Effective Communication) are courses designed to allow eligible students to fulfill the freshman English requirements on an honors level. Attention is given to the development of linguistic proficiency and mastery of expository and critical writing through problem centered and interdisciplinary techniques.

According to the Tougaloo College bulletin, Tougaloo has implemented a Writing Across the Curriculum program to help students develop writing skills and to increase the effectiveness of student learning. The faculty has designed this program to ensure that all Tougaloo students have significant experiences in writing at every level of their progress toward a degree. Beyond the traditional first year composition courses, each general education course during the first and second years includes carefully planned writing requirements. At least one course at the junior or senior level of the student's major area also includes a significant amount of writing that is intended to help students develop writing skills in the discipline. In the senior year, each department requires a senior thesis or other written projects, which represent a major intellectual effort. In addition to the senior paper, a degree candidate at Tougaloo College must demonstrate a reasonable command of written English by passing the English Proficiency Examination. The Writing Across the Curriculum program is monitored by the Commission on Writing.

It is important to recognize that Tougaloo College demands a lot of writing from the students in the curriculum. Unfortunately, despite the high demand for writing, there

seems to be no designated place for the basic writer. It would appear that the basic writer does not exist at Tougaloo College, however, this is very far from the truth. The basic writer is alive at Tougaloo College, but unfortunately ignored, and therefore not doing well, as indicated by some English Instructors interviewed for this study.[14]

At some point during the 1980s, Tougaloo did in fact have a remedial writing course that was designed especially for the basic writer. This course was known as ENG 300 (Writing Workshop), and its focus was on students who found essay writing to be somewhat challenging. The course covered sentence structure, organization, syntax, grammar, punctuation, and idea generation. Unfortunately, at some point during the 1990s this course was terminated as a remedial writing course designed for the basic writer. Herbert Beck, Tougaloo College Writing Center Director, states, "We had to terminate the course as it was initially designed because we couldn't require students to take it, and the students resented the idea that they were not getting credit for the course."[15] Basically, to the student the course seemed to be a "waste of time."

Although Tougaloo College does have a Writing Center, it does not function as an integral part of all the departments, as the Writing Across the Curriculum program suggests. According to Herbert Beck, "The Writing Center works primarily with the English department, and even then, the English faculty do not completely cooperate with the Writing Center to make it more effective and meaningful to the student."[16] The Tougaloo English faculty may or may not demand that their more challenged students attend the Writing Center, and they most certainly do not calculate their attendance at the Writing Center into their grades. The students realize that there are no consequences or

accountability for not going to the Writing Center, and so most of them do not attend as a matter of fact, Mr. Beck also indicates that

> The Writing Center usually sees students when they have received a poor grade on an assignment. They come to the Writing Center, expecting their papers to be rewritten for them through the tutors. At that point, it is explained to the student that writing papers for students is not the function of the Writing Center. A lot of times, those types of students leave the Writing Center, and never return. [17]

These students view the Writing Center as a dry cleaning service where they drop off and pick-up their writing assignments that needed to be "dry cleaned." Unfortunately, in a scenario such as this, learning does not take place. Because the Tougaloo English faculty members do not work more in collaboration with the Writing Center, most students only arrive when they have done poorly on an essay, and have to rewrite the essay. The English Faculty at Tougaloo College believe that the Writing Center could be more effective with their support, but their lack of support only echoes the thoughts of the students, which is that the Writing Center is a waste of time. According to Mr. Beck, "Students can not just show up at the Writing Center infrequently, they do not learn anything that way." [18]

Mr. Beck further indicates that there is a definite need for a basic writing course. He believes that Tougaloo should implement a basic writing course that students would have to take, even receive credit for it. Currently, ENG 300 (Writing Workshop) is being offered again at Tougaloo, but the structure of the course has changed. The course is no longer designed to assist the basic writer; instead it provides individualized tutoring and

instruction for juniors and seniors who have failed the English Proficiency Examination one or more times. Students enrolled in the course are required to pass all parts of the English Proficiency Examination[19] at the specified level of competency.

The exam is divided into seven (7) parts. In the first section, entitled "Language Expression, Sentence Structure, and Word Usage," the student is expected to do the following:

1. Identify sentence fragments
2. Identify run-on sentences
3. Identify errors in subject-verb agreement
4. Identify incorrect principal parts of verbs
5. Identify errors in pronoun case

The second section of the exam is titled "Punctuation and Mechanics." In this section, the student is expected to determine whether or not given sentences contain errors in punctuation and mechanics. The third section is "Capitalization", in which the student is required to determine whether or not capital letters are used correctly in given sentences. The fourth section is "Spelling", in which the student is required to identify the misspelled word when presented with a group of commonly used words. In the fifth section, entitled "The Paragraph", the student is expected to:

1. Unify a paragraph by selecting the best topic sentence for the paragraph of by determining which supporting sentences best develop the main idea of the paragraph.
2. Organize a paragraph by arranging its component sentences into logical order.

3. Recognize the use of key words, pronouns, and transitional expressions to achieve coherence within a paragraph.

In the sixth section, "The Essay," the student is required to write a three-part essay that contains an introduction, body, and conclusion. Finally, in the seventh section, which deals with "Vocabulary," the student is expected to associate words with their meanings, synonyms, and antonyms.

Again, just as with Spelman and Morehouse, Tougaloo does not serve the entire student population well by pretending that the basic writer does not exist. What seems even more ironic is that Tougaloo College demands a high level of competency in the area of writing from its students, but is unwilling to create the machinery to help students accomplish the laudable goal. With so many writing expectations, how does the basic writer graduate from Tougaloo College? Either the grades in English that students receive are inflated, or the basic writer continues to fail semester after semester. In either case, the problem is not rectified, and once again, the basic writer is the one who pays the price.

The question can now be asked: are Spelman, Morehouse, and Tougaloo going to eradicate their current policies regarding basic writing courses? If the intentions of these three colleges are to produce the finest scholars, then it is inevitable that they will have to restructure their current policies on writing instruction. Acknowledging that there are basic writers at Historically Black Colleges is the beginning to empowering students to be active participants in sophisticated academic discourse as insiders. As mentioned earlier, competency in writing throughout history has always empowered people and rewarded them with political and economic power. Handing out degrees to students who

have very little writing ability causes one to question the validity of the degree and the institution giving the degree. Historically Black Colleges that do support basic writing courses should at least acknowledge the existence of students with writing deficiencies, and in this way, these colleges enable their students to have a fighting chance to succeed in the world as part of a society in which language and writing give power and privileges.

NOTES

[1] Spelman College, *2001-2002 College Bulletin* (Atlanta: 2000).

[2] Spelman College, *2001-2002 College Bulletin, "Admissions Criteria"* (Atlanta: 2000).

[3] Spelman College Admissions Class Profile, 2001, accessed 17 January 2002; available from http://www.spelman.edu/prospectivestudents; Internet.

[4] Nicholas Mauriello, Ph.D., personal interview, 22 January 2002. Dr. Maurello is an Assistant Professor of English and the Director of the Comprehensive Writing Program and Writing Lab at Spelman College. The researcher is very thankful for his time.

[5] Anne B. Warner, Ph.D., personal interview, 30 January 2002. Dr. Warner is an Associate Professor of English, and former Chair of the English Department at Spelman College. The researcher is very thankful for her time.

[6] Anne B. Warner, Ph.D., personal interview, 30 January 2002.

[7] The Writing Center staff consists of Dr. Nicholas Mauriello, Director; Elaine Tassy, Assistant Director; and Mr. Dan Bascelli, Multimedia Coordinator.

[8] Christine Sizemore, Ph.D., personal interview, 28 January 2002. Dr. Sizemore is an Assistant Professor of English and Assistant Director of the Freshman Writing Program at Spelman College. The researcher is very thankful for her time.

[9] Morehouse College, *2001-2002 College Catalog.* (Atlanta: 2000).

[10] Morehouse College, *2001-2002 College Catalog, "Admissions Criteria"* (Atlanta, 2000).

[11] Morehouse College, *2001-2002 College Catalog, "Admissions Criteria"* (Atlanta, 2000).

[12] Delores Stephens, personal interview, 5 February 2002. Dr. Stephens is an Associate Professor of English and Chair of the English Department at Morehouse College. The researcher is very thankful for her time.

[13] Tougaloo College, *2001-2003 College Catalog.* (Tougaloo: 2000).

[14] Herbert Beck, personal interview, 19 February 2002. Mr. Beck is the Director of the John U Monro Writing Center and Instructor of English at Tougalo College. The researcher is very thankful for his time.

[15] Herbert Beck, personal interview, 19 February 2002.

[16] Herbert Beck, personal interview, 19 February 2002.

[17] Herbert Beck, personal interview, 19 February 2002.

[18] Herbert Beck, personal interview, 19 February 2002.

[19] Tougaloo College, "English/Writing Proficiency Examination Study Guide.: 2000. Intensive writing examination divided into seven (7) sections that students must pass in order to graduate.

CHAPTER IV

SELECTED HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES SUPPORTING BASIC WRITING PROGRAMS

Bethune-Cookman College

According to the Bethune-Cookman College *Fact Book,*[1] in 1904 Mary McLeod Bethune opened the Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School for Negro girls and the school underwent several stages of growth and development through the years. In 1923, it became a co-ed high school as a result of a merger with another co-ed, Cookman Institute of Jacksonville, Florida. A year later, the school became affiliated with the United Methodist Church; it evolved into a junior college, and by 1931, became known as Bethune-Cookman College.

In 1941, the Florida State Department of Education granted Bethune-Cookman College approval to run a 4-year baccalaureate program offering liberal arts and teacher education. Mrs. Bethune retired in 1942 at which time James E. Colston became president until 1946, when Mrs. Bethune resumed the presidency for a year. In 1960, the college was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The college also joined the United Negro College Organization and the curriculum expanded. A rapidly increasing student enrollment led to the construction of more student housing and classroom buildings. Major fields of study increased from 12 in 1974 to 37 by 1996.

Since 1943, the college has graduated more than 11,250 students. As an institution of the historically Black United Methodist Church, the mission of the college is to serve, in the Christian tradition, the educational, social, and cultural needs of its students – traditional and non traditional – and to develop in them the desire and capacity for continuous intellectual and professional growth, and the inspiration for leadership and service to others. Bethune-Cookman College enrolls promising secondary school graduates and adult learners from diverse social, economic and educational backgrounds. Most of its students come from Florida; however, the College actively recruits students from the national and international communities.

The first requirement for admission to Bethune-Cookman College is the satisfactory completion of an accredited four-year high school course of standard grading or its equivalent. For full admissions, a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.25 or higher is required. Florida students must successfully complete a minimum of 24 academic credits in grades 9 through 12 for graduation. Students who have demonstrated exceptional academic ability are permitted to enroll at Bethune-Cookman College after completion of their junior year in high school in early admissions. Early admission applicants must have the following:

1. Test scores in the top 15th percentile statewide or nationally (SAT score of 1100 or above, ACT score of 24 or above)
2. "A" and "B" grades in high school
3. A recommendation from the student's high school counselor.
4. An interview with college officials

5. Letters of recommendation from parents and the student's high school principal [2]

In determining the potential of a prospective student, the cumulative academic record is given primary consideration. However, the school's Admissions Committee has the authority to consider other documented indicators in applicants considered as academic risk, and admit, albeit on a probationary basis, a percentage of these applicants who have not met the academic requirement of a 2.25 cumulative grade point average. These students are required to take prescribed courses, such as remedial writing, with a predetermined number of credit hours in order for designated faculty advisors to monitor their academic performance during their probationary status.

Unlike Spelman, Morehouse and Tougaloo, Bethune-Cookman College utilizes a basic writing program. The College Testing Office provides extensive placement testing to all freshman and transfer students for placement in reading, English, and mathematics. Any student who does not successfully pass the placement examination in English is required to take either EN 111 (Essentials of Writing I), or EN 112 (Essentials of Writing II). EN 111 is a course covering the essential language skills necessary for college English, with emphasis on grammar, sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, and Standard English usage. Students enrolled in this course are also required to attend the writing laboratory. EN 112 is a course designed for those students who need essential composition skills necessary for college English 131. This course also requires students to attend the writing lab. According to Michelle Thompson,[3] English Instructor and Area Coordinator, the writing lab is staffed with one full time English Instructor and several student tutors. In addition, English instructors are quite diligent about providing one-on-

one feedback to students during office hours or by individual appointments. Attendance in the lab sessions is a percentage of the student's final grade. The technology that Bethune-Cookman College utilizes to help with remedial instruction is an online program called Skills Tutor. Students can access Skills Tutor from their dormitory rooms or in the writing lab.

Dr. Lois Fennelly, Chair of the Division of General Studies, indicates that Bethune-Cookman College has approximately 450 students registered each semester for remedial writing courses. Each class is capped at 20 students so that those students can receive more individualized instruction.[4] Dr. Fennelly further observes that "Since the program's inception in 1976, the average of students successfully passing our remedial writing courses is 53%. Prior to 1976, the student population was different."[5] In order to pass the writing courses, students must pass a department-made objective grammar examination at 70%, and write an essay that is holistically scored by two or more instructors. For the students who do not pass the remedial writing courses, Michelle Thompson states "these students are required to repeat the course they have failed, as well as pass the two exit examinations given in the department."[6]

Bethune-Cookman College is aware that a number of people are opposed to remedial education in the United States. For example, in South Carolina alone, remedial education for higher education has been completely eradicated. At Bethune-Cookman College, however, the remedial program is taken very seriously; therefore, to ensure that the college does not share the same fate as South Carolina, Bethune-Cookman College receives a Title III Grant for Developmental Education from the federal government. According to Dr. Fennelly,

> The remedial writing courses at BCC are extremely valuable to us. It is our mission to work with all students, even those who may come to college ill prepared for the rigors of a college level course. We want our students to be good writers because writing is visible, and often part of a permanent record. It represents Bethune-Cookman quality.[7]

The reward of knowing that students benefit from basic writing programs is invaluable to Bethune-Cookman College. More than half of its students successfully pass the remedial writing programs, therefore, making the efforts of the institution to assist struggling students all worthwhile.

Oakwood College

Following along in the support of basic writing courses is Oakwood College, located in Huntsville, Alabama. According to Mervyn A. Warren, in his book *Oakwood! A Vision Splendid*,[8] Oakwood College's humble beginnings date back to November 16, 1896. The school received $8,000 from the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, a small farm of 360 acres, four (4) buildings plus nine (9) slave cabins, and 65 oak trees. The school consisted of a principal, three (3) teachers, and sixteen students. Not yet a college, the private facility located in Huntsville, Alabama started "in the interests of the colored people," and was known as Oakwood Industrial School (Warren 34).

Ellen G. White was the spiritual leader of the Adventist denomination and one of the founders of Oakwood College. She supported the building project of Oakwood financially and physically. Before 1896, the Adventist denomination had one college in

Battle Creek, Michigan. However, this school (Battle Creek College) educated whites only. It was the vision of Ellen G. White for a College to be built for the sole purpose of educating blacks.

The initial course of study at the school seemed to have been on a grammar school level and encompassed English, Religion, and Industrial Arts. The course of study was designed this way to encourage all students, no matter their scholastic aptitude, to apply to Oakwood. The school's first bulletin read:

> A good practical English Course of four years is offered. For those students who are not prepared at once to enter upon this course, a preparatory course of instruction is furnished, so that none need to remain away because of lack of education. All students who complete the course of study, and sustain a good moral character, will be granted a diploma [. . .]
>
> [. . .] Oakwood Industrial School purposes to furnish the student instruction and training in Agricultural and Mechanical work, to be carried on at the same time that he is pursuing his literary course. The student will thus be taught the Dignity of Labor, and how to be master of labor, rather than its slave. [9]

By April 29, 1912, Oakwood College had a new president, staff, and name--Oakwood Manual Training School, but in 1917, the college received yet another name under a new president, J. I. Beardsley, and was then known as Oakwood Junior College. Finally, the last name change occurred on December 4, 1958, under the leadership of President G.J. Millet, when Oakwood received full official accreditation as a four-year liberal arts institution, and became known to this day as Oakwood College. Since its

beginning as an industrial school, Oakwood College has grown from 16 students in 1896 to enrolling over 1,700 students annually. Oakwood College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The mission of the college is to provide access to educational opportunity, academic excellence, and spiritual development for its students who come from diverse geographic, cultural, educational, and socioeconomic backgrounds. The college has five (5) separate categories of acceptance for students. They are:

1. **Early Acceptance**. Students still in high school who wish to receive early acceptance, who have completed at least six (6) semesters and have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0

2. **Regular Acceptance**. Students with a GPA between 2.0 and 4.0 who may take 16-17 hours per semester

3. **Provisional Regular**. Students with a minimum GPA of 2.0 who did not take the ACT or SAT. (The test is given on campus during freshman orientation.)

4. **Academic Probation**. Students with a GPA between 1.70 and 1.99 who will be limited to 13 credit hours per semester.

5. **Provisional Probation**. Students with a GPA between 1.70 and 1.99 with no ACT or SAT scores. (The test is given on campus during freshman orientation.) [10]

If a student is accepted to Oakwood College on provisional status or on academic

probation, services are provided from the college to assist the student in achieving academic excellence. The Committee on Monitoring Students' Academic Progress (MSAP), which consists of a consortium of college administrators, departmental chairs, faulty, and staff, ensures students' compliance with the academic policies of the institution. Qualitative and quantitative data of students, such as GPAs, class reports, class failures, remediation, withdrawals, incompletes, and maximum time frames for academic work completion, are all used to determine a student's chances of successfully completing the major course of study. At least twice a year, this committee meets to review the academic progression of students whose academic standing is in jeopardy. Recommendations are made to suspend, dismiss, retain, or warn based on the data presented. The committee considers a student's academic progress to be in serious jeopardy when the first semester's current GPA is less than 1.0, or after two semesters when the cumulative GPA is less than 1.5, or after four semesters, or a total of 64 hours, and the cumulative GPA is less than 2.0.

In addition to Oakwood's commitment to assisting academically challenged students, the college employs effective remedial writing courses to enhance student's academic progression. Beginning freshmen entering Oakwood College on academic probation must pursue a prescribed course of remedial studies during their first year, which may include any of the following: ENG 090-091, ENG 095, and ENG 099. These remedial courses, which are in addition to the 128 hours needed for graduation, must each be passed with a minimum grade of "C." Any course failed must be repeated the next semester until passed.

According to Elizabeth Wright, Writing Specialist at Oakwood's Writing Lab, the curriculum in the remedial writing courses is designed to give the freshman the opportunity to develop clear, coherent, and unified writing.[11] ENG 090-091 (English as a Second Language) are ESL courses designed for students whose native language is not English; the courses emphasize the study and practice of English in its written form, and include mandatory lab time. ENG 095 (Composition Skills Review) is a required course for all beginning freshmen during their first semester, if the ACT enhanced English score is below 16 or the SAT English score is below 410. Writing lab time is required, in addition to passing an exit examination. ENG 099 (Developmental Reading) is required of all beginning freshmen during their first semester, if the ACT enhanced English score is below 16 or the SAT English score is below 410. Laboratory time is required for this course as well.

As a matter of fact, all of the remedial writing courses have 24 hours of mandatory lab time in order to supplement what is being taught in the remedial courses. Even after the students complete their writing lab hours, they are still required to continue to go back to the writing lab. Oakwood's approach to writing seems conducive to learning; its basic writing students do not feel that the time they spent in the lab is wasted. The students see an improvement in their writing and this success produces an attitudinal difference towards college and learning. This sentiment is shared by Dr. Bernard Benn, Professor of English, and former English Department Chair at Oakwood College. He indicates that,

> Oakwood strongly believes in the remedial writing program that the college has. The remedial writing courses are extremely valuable because they allow

> the non-traditional student to be given a chance to get a 4-year college education... Oakwood College has had remedial writing courses for the past 25 years, and since the inception of the courses, 85% of the students taking the remedial writing courses have successfully passed. Furthermore, Oakwood continues to track students that have taken remedial writing courses even through ENG 101 and 102. The success rate of these students passing ENG 101 and 102 is 85%.[12]

In agreement with Dr. Bernard Benn, Oakwood College Writing Specialist, Elizabeth Wright, also concludes that

> Oakwood's remedial writing program is successful because the college keeps an ongoing evaluation of the success of our at-risk students, and Oakwood recognizes the importance of educating minorities. We need remedial writing courses to make the disenfranchised a productive part of our society. [13]

Oakwood College demands a high level of writing performance from its students. For instance, in addition to the required writing courses, each student is required to take an English proficiency examination during the junior year. Upper division transfer students who have completed Freshman Composition are required to take the English Proficiency Examination during the first semester in which the examination is offered. This examination is administered as scheduled in the school calendar, once every semester; students who fail to pass the examination twice are required to enroll in and pass ENG 250 (English Fundamentals) in order to qualify for graduation. ENG 250 teaches the basic mechanics of sentence and paragraph structure and the course content is continuously reviewed until the student can demonstrate the ability to write acceptable

Standard English. Lastly, all seniors are required to pass a departmental exit examination in their major area of study prior to graduation.

Oakwood College acknowledges the fact that if they have students struggling with writing, the college is obligated to facilitate their needs. Oakwood's emphasis is on liberal arts, and the college strives to provide resources to support and maintain all aspects of its institutional advancement and development (i.e., viable academic programs, strong faculty development programs, modern instruction, a technologically sophisticated campus, and satisfied students). In 1991, according to statistics from the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), Oakwood College ranked fourth in the nation among all colleges and universities supplying African-American applicants to medical schools and sixth in the nation in the number of African-Americans accepted into medical schools. Perhaps without remedial education, some of these fine students included in the AAMC statistics would never have had a chance at a four-year college education. Evidently, there is more to be said about the usefulness of remediation in college writing than critics give credit for.

Morris Brown College

Following in the support of remedial writing programs at historically black colleges is Morris Brown College, in Atlanta, Georgia. According to the school's history, on October 15, 1885, 107 students and nine (9) teachers walked into a wooden structure at the corner of Boulevard and Houston Streets. [14] and thus began the formal opening of the first educational institution in Georgia under the sole patronage of African Americans. The institution was named to honor the memory of the second consecrated

Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church.

The circumstances that evoked the founding of Morris Brown College are traditionally linked to a visit by a group of Clark College trustees. Layman S. Wiley suggested building a school rather than furnishing a room at Clark College; Reverend Wesley John Gaines agreed, and on January 5, 1881, he introduced a resolution calling for the establishment in Atlanta of an institution for the moral, spiritual, and intellectual development of black boys and girls. The steps between the resolution and the actual opening of the college were few and simple: The Georgia Conference was persuaded to join in the endeavor, so an assembly of trustees from both conferences convened in Big Bethel Church and selected the Boulevard site as the school's home. In May of 1885, the state of Georgia granted a charter to Morris Brown College of the AME church.

Since the school was a product of the church, the institution's philosophical thrust was also determined by the church and this created a system of support which functioned to channel the school's early energies toward developing programs to serve the needs of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. The college at that time, was largely dependent upon a denomination whose constituency was primarily unskilled, untrained, and economically unstable. In order to survive, the college had to absorb into its enrollment, a large segment of underachieving students whose parents were loyal supporters of the church that kept its doors open. What began as a survival strategy of Morris Brown in 1881 became the liberation cry for black masses and the country at large in the 1960s. At that point in higher education, the cry was heard in all colleges--black and white, large and small, state and private--in the from of pressures to develop programs in tune with the needs of economically and academically disadvantaged youth.

For Morris Brown however, it was a matter of doing what came naturally, better and more effectively.

The uniqueness of Morris Brown is the institutional flexibility based on the assumption that a college can serve the needs of all students with the desire and potential to earn a college degree. Morris Brown College takes pride in being a campus atmosphere conducive to well balanced growth, and having an academic program consisting of course content, course requirements, and teaching methods geared toward the preparation, motivation and achievement levels of all students. The college has not only inspired average and better than average students to great heights of achievement in competition, but has also transformed sensitive "high risk" students into capable performers far better than their credentials suggest. Without the remedial programs, particularly writing, these "high risk" students would not have had an opportunity to obtain a college education.

Morris Brown College admission is designed to accommodate students with diverse educational backgrounds and educational goals. Individuals seeking admission to Morris Brown usually fall into one of the following categories:

1. High School Graduates. For unconditional admission, high school graduates must have earned a score of 18 ACT/Equivalent SAT; maintained a grade point average of "C" in courses taken.

2. High School Equivalency (GED). For unconditional admission, the applicant must have earned an average score of 48. Transcripts of last attendance in high school may be required. Students must have a score of at least 18 on the ACT/Equivalent SAT.

3. Transfer Students. Students transferring from other post secondary institutions must have maintained a cumulative GPA of 2.0 ("C") at the last institution attended. Students who have 12 semester hours or equivalent quarter hours of acceptable academic credit at the college or university level may be admitted as transfer students.

4. Transient Students. Students enrolled at another institution, who wish to pursue courses at Morris Brown to be transferred back to their institution, may apply for admission as transient students. A letter of approval/good standing from the home institution is required. [15]

The Remedial Education Program at Morris Brown is designed to assist "academically challenged" students to increase their proficiencies in two areas: English and mathematics. At the start of each semester, every freshman student is required to take a placement test. The results from the placement test help to determine which English class freshman students will be placed into. The remedial writing class at Morris Brown is ENG 099 (Basic Writing), which presents functional aid in preparing students for ENG 101. It stresses fundamentals of the English language, by concentrating on paragraph development, idea generation, sentence structure, and mechanics. The course also focuses on the practical aspects of writing.

In addition to taking ENG 099, students are required to attend the writing lab (Plato Lab). At the Plato Lab, students receive computerized programs designed to help with writing. Students spend as much time as they need to complete each of the computerized modules. Because the Plato Lab accompanies ENG 099, students must

pass the lab requirements in order to pass ENG 099. Students receive either an "F" (Fail) or a "P" (Pass) for their grades from the Plato Lab, and for the writing class itself, students must earn at least a "C." According to Dr. Niaz Khan, the Director of Morris Brown's Writing Center, the basic writing courses are successful. Tremendous improvement is shown in the writing of students who take these courses. [16] Dr. Khan would like Morris Brown to offer more sections of the basic writing courses because there are so many students who need them. However, the current level of funding does not allow the expansion of the program to accommodate all of the students who need this assistance. As it is designed now, the Writing Center is set up with faculty and peer tutors. In addition to working closely with the basic writing students, the Writing Center functions as a resource for the entire campus across the curriculum.

The main thrust of our argument in this study has been that American colleges, indeed any college interested in the success of its students, should not abandon the needs of the basic writer. Historically Black Colleges and Universities, in particular, have the added responsibility of helping the basic writer succeed since many students rely on these colleges for making the transition to a life of opportunities. The relevant question here then is: what kind of writing program should be available to the basic writer? This is the question we address in the following chapter.

NOTES

[1] Bethune-Cookman College, *2000-2002 Fact Book* (Daytona: 1999).

[2] Bethune-Cookman College, *2000-2002 Fact Book, "Admissions Criteria,"* Daytona: 1999).

[3] Michelle Thompson, personal interview, 5 March, 2002. Michelle Thompson is an Instructor of English and Area Coordinator at Bethune-Cookman College. The researcher is very thankful for her time.

[4] Lois Fennelly, Ph.D., personal interview, 12 March, 2002. Dr. Fennelly is the Division Chair of General Studies at Bethune-Cookman College. The researcher is very thankful for her time.

[5] Lois Fennelly, Ph.D., personal interview, 12 March, 2002.

[6] Michelle Thompson, personal interview, 5 March, 2002.

[7] Lois Fennelly, Ph.D., personal interview, 12 March, 2002.

[8] Mervyn A. Warren, Ph.D. *Oakwood! A Vision Splendid.* Collegedale, TN: The College Press, 1996). Mervyn A. Warren is a Professor of Religion at Oakwood College and author of several books, some of which chronicle the history of Oakwood College.

[9] Oakwood College, *1999-2001 College Bulletin, "Admissions Criteria,"* (Huntsville: 1998).

[10] Oakwood College, *1999-2001 College Bulletin, "Admissions Criteria,"* (Huntsville: 1998).

[11] Elizabeth Wright, Ph.D., personal interview, 16 April, 2002. Elizabeth Wright is the Writing Specialist and English Instructor at Oakwood College. The researcher is very thankful for her time.

[12] Bernard Benn, Ph.D., personal interview, 18 April, 2002. Dr. Bernard Benn is an Associate Professor and former Chair of the English Department at Oakwood College. The researcher is very thankful for his time.

[13] Elizabeth Wright, Ph.D., personal interview, 16 April, 2002.

[14] Morris Brown *2000-2001 College Catalog.* (Atlanta: 1999).

[15] Morris Brown *2000-2001 College Catalog.* "Admissions Criteria,". (Atlanta: 1999).

[16] Niaz Khan, Ph.D., personal interview, 2 May, 2002. Dr. Naiz Kahn an Associate Professor of English, and the Director of the Writing Center at Morris Brown College. The researcher is very thankful for his time.

CHAPTER V

BASIC WRITING PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The Need for a Transitional Studies Department

The challenges faced by departments or courses using the term "remedial" have been addressed in chapter two. We indicated earlier that opposers of remedial writing programs believe that students who require remedial instruction should not be in college at all. In addition, basic writing students also generally feel anxiety when they discover, in some cases for the first time, that they have writing deficiencies. If a student is also dealing with a title that attaches a stigma to his identity, this only worsens the problem. Therefore, the proposed department to house a basic writing program should have a name that has little or no negative connotations. A department with a name such as Transitional Studies may be more appropriate because basic writing students are making a "transition" from a remedial level of writing to a college level of writing. Furthermore, the name "transitional" does not offensively attack a student's identity nor does it suggest that they are "developmental" or "remedial" learners.

The mission of the Transitional Studies Department would be to support the English Department and other Undergraduate Studies Departments by identifying students who are not academically prepared to attempt college level writing courses, and offering instruction in the relevant area(s). The Transitional Studies Department would

also prepare students for the "transition" to the General Education core curriculum through the offering of learning enhancement courses. The department should provide advisement and academic support to provisionally admitted students. The objectives of the department would be to: (1) Identify students whose English, and/or reading comprehension skills are below acceptable levels; (2) Determine appropriate course placement for each individual student; (3) Provide advisement and learning enhancement courses for Provisional Students; and (4) Provide a writing/tutoring center for students who need supplemental assistance with writing assignments. The following is a further discussion of the objectives of a Transitional Studies Department.

1. **Identify students whose English, and/or reading comprehension skills are below acceptable levels**. Administration of the college's placement test would prove to be most effective in determining who needs remediation courses and who does not. The placement test could be administered at the beginning of each semester. Not all students who are accepted into the college would be required to take the placement test; only students whose SAT verbal scores are below 510, and high school GPA is lower than a 2.0, would be required to take the placement test. Students who exceed a 510 score on the SAT, and have a high school GPA higher than 2.0, more than likely are not demonstrating signs of weakness in writing or reading. However, there may be some students who are the exception, therefore, in those cases, students should be reviewed more extensively. The placement test itself would test a student's reading comprehension skills as well as writing abilities through a writing sample. With the writing sample, students would be instructed to write about a certain topic and given approximately 60 minutes to complete the essay. In order to remain objective (since writing is subjective),

three different readers should read the writing samples, and the student's identity should remain anonymous. Any student receiving poor placement testing results should then be placed in a Transitional Studies course.

2. **Determine appropriate course placement for each individual student.** This could be done according to the placement test scores, and provide instruction would then be provided at the appropriate level in relevant writing courses to facilitate entry of student into college level course work. Courses that could be offered in a Transitional Studies program include: 098 Writing Fundamentals, 099 Introduction to Composition, and 100 Critical Reading and Thinking. More information about these courses will be provided later in this discussion.

3. **Provide advisement and learning enhancement courses for Provisional Students.** Part of the admissions requirement at any college should be at least a combined SAT score of 860 along with a 2.0 high school GPA. Students who do not meet these standards can be accepted under the category of Provisional Student. The conditions of provisional acceptance are that the student complete all Transitional Studies reading and writing courses within two semesters and earn a minimum of a 2.0 GPA on at least 20 hours of college-level work. In addition, provisional students cannot register for classes without the signature of their advisor. Therefore, registration blocks should be placed on these students. This should be done in order to protect the student from being tempted to register for classes that he or she may not be academically prepared to take.

4. **Provide a writing/tutoring center for students who need supplemental assistance with writing assignments.** It is true that courses geared specifically toward the basic writer will help develop writing skills. However, supplemental assistance

should also be provided to the student. Outside of the classroom environment, the basic writer may feel the need to work further in a one-on-one setting. A tutor can help achieve this, as well as continue to boost the confidence of the basic writer.

The responsibilities of the Transitional Studies Department may seem to be quite enormous; however, the actual size of the department does not have to be a large one. The Transitional Studies Department should be an independent department that works closely with the English Department. It is only logical to see why these two departments would have to work hand in hand because the Transitional Studies Department and the English Department would handle all writing courses for the Historically Black College. After students needing remediation complete their course work in Transitional Studies, these students would filter into the English Department for their English 101, 102, and literature courses. Likewise, if an English 101 instructor realized at the beginning of a semester that she has a basic writing student enrolled in her course, the English Instructor now has a recourse. Rather than the English instructor ignoring the basic writing student, the basic writing student could now be referred to the Transitional Studies Department.

There would be only four (4) courses taught by Transitional Studies, therefore the faculty size would not be nearly as large as the English Department. Furthermore, it is necessary for basic writing courses to function independently. The mere history of basic writing courses, as discussed in chapter two, reveals this need for independence. As previously mentioned, part of the reason that so many Historically Black Colleges have had failures with basic writing programs is simply the lack of accountability and responsibility. When basic writing courses are housed in English Departments or General Education Departments, the "buck" is constantly passed. Often, professors do

not want to teach these courses, and the interest of the professors is lost. Sometimes, professors get "stuck" with a remedial class for one reason or another, but with an independent department designed to cater to the needs of basic writing students, professors specifically wanting to work in such a department will be recruited. The course descriptions of the four classes that could be offered in Transitional Studies include, but may not be limited to, the following:

TSE 098 – Writing Fundamentals. This course would help students improve basic writing skills. The course will emphasize: understanding sentence structure, reviewing grammar extensively, sharpening proofreading and editing skills, developing paragraphs with clearly expressed main ideas, and providing support using examples, explanations, and other methods.

TSE 099 – Introduction to Composition. This course would prepare students for college level English composition. Topics would include understanding audience, developing and organizing paragraphs and essays, using transitions, revising, and improving grammar and proofreading skills.

TSR 098 – Practical College Reading. This course provides instruction in vocabulary and comprehension skills with emphasis on academic applications. Concentration would be given to reading as it applies to writing, and organization of ideas. Students will learn how to apply with success, what they read to essay writing. Topics include vocabulary development, comprehension skills development, critical reading skills, and study skills.

TSR 099 – Critical Reading and Thinking. This course would be designed to develop the student's critical thinking abilities through a variety of literary, academic, and journalistic writings. The student would look at contemporary issues from varying perspectives and would practice evaluating evidence and supporting opinions logically. The readings and assignments would challenge the student to analyze and evaluate. The course also would provide instruction in vocabulary and comprehension skills with emphasis on academic applications.

The concept of composing that transitional students have internalized before their college experience must be changed. It is possible for remedial classes to help students learn that there is a process to writing. For example, the student who "does not know where to start," can be introduced to freewriting, a technique that often enables the writer suffering from a block to gain a starting point. This does not mean that students are left to freewrite daily, but it is a beginning when a student only sees failure. There is great value in freewriting. Inexperienced writers do not realize that there are techniques to writing and thought development. A Department of Transitional Studies would allow opportunity for these techniques to be taught, as opposed to traditional composition classes that assume that students already know many of these writing strategies.

A remedial writing program does not have to be a negative, boring experience for students. Teachers can help students experience the rich possibilities of writing. They can lead students to see the value of writing by relating writing to real life events and experiences. Rather than asking students to write an essay on "My Summer Vacation," why not turn them loose on a campus event with pad and pencil in hand. Allow them to

create an event to write about, turn them into investigative reporters. This in turn allows students to make meaning for self and others. Assignments such as this, of course, must be carefully structured and developed, but at least it abrogates the mundane experience of writing about "My Summer Vacation."

Transitional Studies Departments are a requirement if any college really wants to help students overcome their writing deficiencies. Basic writing programs move at a reduced pace and address directly the needs of the basic writer. TSE 098, TSE 099, TSR 098, and TSR 099 are classes designed especially for the basic writer. The poorly prepared writer does not have to feel overwhelmed with the expectations of a traditional composition class because the remedial classes are structured differently. As educators, we have turned our backs on basic writing college students, but these students do exist, and ignoring them and their problems will not make them disappear.

Transitional Studies Department

Course Syllabi

The syllabi that would be used for the four classes taught in the Transitional Studies Department should be very detailed in explaining exactly what the instructor's expectations are of the students (see Appendix A for sample syllabi). Instructors should remember that the syllabus functions somewhat as a contract between the instructor and the student, and through the syllabus, the instructor is communicating exactly what her class will entail, and the methods in which she expects to achieve the course goals. After reading the course syllabus, students would be clear on what the instructor's expectations

are and they would have to decide how they would meet the instructor's expectations. A student's continuance in a course is generally assumed to indicate the student's acceptance of the policies and requirements stated in the course syllabus. In order to be effective, all the syllabi for the Transitional Studies courses will include:

1. Texts. Listing the text to be utilized informs the students of exactly which books they need to purchase from the bookstore. Listing the author, publisher, publication city and year, informs the students of the most current edition of the texts to look for.

2. Supplies for the course should be listed next. Listing the supplies needed for a Transitional Studies course makes the students aware of additional items they may be required to purchase for the course. For the Transitional Studies writing courses, a computer disk is necessary for work that is done in the College's computer lab. For all of the Transitional Studies courses, a standard sized composition notebook, and a good college-level dictionary ought to be required.

3. Prerequisites are important to list on course syllabi in the Transitional Studies Department. Prerequisites inform students of whether they are eligible to take certain courses. For TSE 098, satisfactory passing of the placement test is necessary for students. To be enrolled in TSE 099, students must have taken TSE 098, and passed with at least a "C", or passed the placement test. For TSR 098 students must have passed the placement test. To be enrolled in TSR 099, students must have taken TSR 098, and passed with at least a "C", or passed the placement test.

4. Listing the course description of a class allows students to have a complete overview of the Transitional Studies course they may be registered for. The course description explains thoroughly exactly what will be covered in the class.

5. Course objectives are listed next. Here, the instructor lists exactly what students will accomplish in the course. For instance, one course objective a student enrolled in TSE 098 will accomplish is writing organized paragraphs and essays with effective transitions.

6. Core outcomes are listed on a Transitional Studies syllabus after course objectives. The core outcomes inform students of exactly what the instructor's projected outcome of abilities in students will be at the completion of the course.

7. Teaching methodology/strategies must be required to be listed on all the syllabi in the Transitional Studies Department. In any course, each professor is going to have his own way of teaching. Two different professors can teach the same exact course, but cover the materials in the course in two different ways. Not all professors share the same teaching style or philosophy. Therefore, listing a professor's teaching methodology/strategies on a syllabus would enable students to know exactly how a particular professor conceptualizes his course, and how he intends to accomplish his teaching goals for the course.

8. Course Requirements must be included on all syllabi in the Transitional Studies Department. Students should know exactly what a professor requires of them in a particular course. For instance, in TSE 099, students are required to stay current with the readings covered for the course journal. Therefore, once the course instructor has given a reading assignment, the instructor would expect and require that all students in

the course complete the reading assignment for class discussion. The student is aware that the instructor would require this because the information has been listed on the course syllabus.

9. Student Evaluation is a necessary component on course syllabi. Students enrolled in all classes in the Transitional Studies Department will know precisely how they are being evaluated for a grade at the completion of a course. In the TSE writing courses for instance, 60% of a student's grade is evaluated based on essays, 20% is evaluated based on the final examination, 10% is evaluated based on in-class work/homework, and the last 10% is evaluated based on the course journal. When the student evaluation methods are listed on a syllabus, students at any time during the semester can calculate their grades.

10. The grading scale that an instructor utilizes for assignments in a course should be listed on the course syllabi. Students have the right to know what percentile constitutes which grade. For example, in the Transitional Studies Department, the following is appropriate: 90-100 = A, 80-89 = B, 70-79 = C, 60-69 = D, and 0-59 = F.

11. Equally as important as the student's evaluation is the teacher evaluation. Every student enrolled in any Transitional Studies course should have the opportunity to complete a teacher evaluation at the completion of each course. Teacher evaluations are pertinent in helping the faculty to improve and to continue their march toward teaching excellence.

12. An instructor's policy on attendance for a particular course should be stated on all course syllabi. Students should know that the instructor expects them to attend classes regularly and punctually. This is important because at the conclusion of a course,

attendance can play a role in determining a student's grade. Poor attendance in a course can reflect poor performance as well, which can result in a poor grade.

13. It is also important for an instructor to list what his or her policy is on late work and makeup work. As stated previously, no two professors teach a course the same way, therefore, different professors would have different policies on late work on makeup work on assignments. This is not necessarily a bad thing; the differences simply reflect the uniqueness of each professor.

14. Lastly, the outline of course content will be listed on all syllabi in the Transitional Studies Department. This section of all course syllabi is extremely important for students. The outline of course content lets students know exactly what will be covered each day in the course(s) they are registered for. This can prove to be very helpful in the event that a student has to be absent from class and needs to know what will be covered in advance. The outline of course content allows students to stay organized and current with their assignments.

Lesson Plans

In the Department of Transitional Studies, having effective lesson plans is an intricate part of producing productive teaching (see Appendix B for sample Lesson Plans). Lesson plans enable English instructors to stay on task with their lessons, analyze and study their teaching methods, and evaluate expectations of students through the actual lesson plans. Good lesson plans should have the following:

1. The date of the intended lesson is necessary. Giving the date allows the professor to be aware of which day it is that he intends to teach a particular lesson.

2. Stating the course and time identifies for the professor which course the intended lesson is for and the time and day the course meets. Supplying this information diminishes confusion, especially when a professor is teaching two sections of TSE 098, however, quite naturally the professor would teach each section at separate times.

3. The title of the intended lesson plan is necessary in order to state what the intended lesson plan will be covering.

4. Listing the objectives of the lesson plan is very important because the objectives identify exactly what the professor views as his purpose of the lesson plan.

5. The next item that should be listed in an effective lesson plan is the expected outcome. Stating the expected outcome identifies exactly what the professor expects his students to be able to accomplish at the conclusion of the lesson.

6. Listing the activity in the lesson plan explains exactly what students will be required to do in the lesson. The activity can range from students listening to a class lecture to actively being engaged in a classroom debate.

7. The materials/resources should be next. The materials/resource refers to first, whether the activity requires students to have other material/resource to complete the assigned activity. Secondly, materials/resources refers to what materials/resources the professor is going to utilize for his evaluation of the student's activity.

8. Lastly, a good lesson plan should also include a teacher evaluation. The teacher evaluation allows the instructor to be evaluated on the level of interest and enthusiasm demonstrated by students, as well as to allow the instructor to be evaluated by selected questions on evaluative methods.

Effective Writing Assignments

The basic writer in the Transitional Studies Department should be exposed to writing assignments that will be challenging and easy to comprehend (see Appendix C for sample writing assignments). The purpose of the writing assignments should be to help students become legitimate participants in the discourse of the academic community by acknowledging, respecting, and nurturing the limited knowledge of language they already possess. In other words, the assignments should use the language that the basic writer already knows as a bridge to understanding the language of academic discourse. As a result, the basic writer should be able to communicate with the academic community on his own terms, not with the false persona or voice of the outsider, but with the clear, confident authentic speech of one who belongs. When the basic writer connects and relates to writing assignments, his confidence in writing will be strengthened. The basic writer will then start to feel more like a legitimate "writer" as opposed to a "remedial" student.

One of the primary materials that should be utilized to embark upon academic discourse is literature, both critical and creative. Fiction, non fiction, novels, short stories, biographies, oratorical exercises, and expressing opinions on current events and political issues, can all be utilized to stimulate serious thought to complete writing assignments. The assignments should offer students an opportunity to experience not only essays, but also monologues, role-playing, and journals.

An example of an effective writing assignment can be observed in the writing assignment for TSE 098 entitled "Overcoming Obstacles" (See Appendix C). In this

assignment students are asked to write about an obstacle or an unpleasant event or experience that resulted in personal growth. They are asked to think about how the obstacle has affected their identities, and discuss how they came to terms with the experience, and what they ultimately learned. Lastly, the assignment asks students to reflect on the memoir *Autobiography of a Face*, by Lucy Grealy[1] – that at this point in the course they have already read – and discuss how her obstacle compares to their own. Lucy Grealy's memoir delicately tells her great story of facing the enormous obstacle of being diagnosed with a potentially terminal cancer at age nine. In her memoir, Grealy describes her experience of great suffering and remarkable strength without sentimentality and with considerable wit.

Because this writing assignment is a personal narrative essay, students are able to connect to the author through her memoir, and their own experience. The assignment lends itself effortlessly to an explorative process. Obstacles are events that we have experienced at some point in our lives. Therefore, the assignment "Overcoming Obstacles" is easily accessible to basic writing students. This writing assignment is effective because it allows students to articulate through writing that which connects them to the discourse of the academic community on their terms, and most importantly through their own voices. The assignment is both clear and engaging.

Student Essays

The following student shall be known as student "X." Student "X" is an actual student who was monitored and worked with on a one-on-one basis in a remedial writing course environment in one of the colleges the researcher visited for the purpose of this

study. Upon registering for the basic writing course, Student "X" informed the instructor that she "hates writing and has never been good at it." Student "X" and the rest of the class were then given a diagnostic writing sample to assess their current writing abilities. The assignment was to "write an essay about the most interesting experience you have had in your life." Students were given the entire class time of two hours to complete the essay. In the time that was allotted, student "X" wrote the following:

The Most Interesting Experience I Had in My Life

When growing up you experience many things. Sometime parent may not think you ready to experience or be shown thing, especially when you are dealing wih life or death. No one know when you are ready to see and deal with certain aspect of life. Sometime what parents don't know wont hurt them. Being exposed to different things make you value life and educate you in a way that change your life.

When my grandfather pass away my family and me went to Cairo, Georgia for funeral. He was being prepared at my brother-in-laws funeral home which is also his home. I also love staying there when I visit him. He spends most of his time in the basement where he did his work. Every time I got close the door my mother would yell at me to stay away. Tony never said anything to me he never said I wasn't welcom but when my grandfather died I just had to get down there to see what was going on. I did not understand why my mom would say the deceased was in heaven when there bodies was in the funeral parlor. I asked my mom if I could

spend the night at the house whil she went back to the hotel and her answer was yes.

It was late in the afternoon when Tony went downstairs to begin work. I followed him, because the curious little girl that I was sneaking around the corner. I saw him roll out my grandfather placing him directly under the biggest light I've ever seen in a house. I made sure he didn't spot me snooping, I tried to get closer so I could get a better view instead I fell over the foot stool that was right in front of me. I thought he was going to ask me leave but he didn't. Tony most little girls would be afraid to even come down to the basement better yet come near the house. I even wondered myself why I wasn't scared. Tony asked me if I wanted to help I said yes so he through me some gloves and told me to put them on and never tell anyone especially my mom.

I passe him all the tools that I could lift to him. He explained to me why you must disinfect the body, secure the eyes, and seal the mouth. He put a base chemical in the tank so he could start embalming. Tony showed me how to make a small incision on the right collar bone, then make another incision on the vessels and proceed to put the chemical into the body. He took a long silver rod that was connected to a machine whic echoed like a vacuum, then told me to hold it while he made an incision on the stomach. I watched him take the rod and suck all swelling and excess fluid out of the body. After that the embaliming process was over. We went upstairs so we could le the chemicals do its wor. The next day we

dressed my grandfather into his military uniform and took him upstairs for viewein.

I never told my mom what I did and learned that night until I was sixteen years old. I could not tell her when I was a little girl because she thought I was too young. The thought of Tony letting me learn how to embalm on her dad was to much. Even to today my mother thinks I am weard. At seven she did not want me exposed. I learned a lot. I am not quick to have that procedure. If it wasn't for my grandfather dying, I never would have gotten my chance to my experience.[2]

In this essay, Student "X" does demonstrate some idea generation. The fact that the student understands the assignment is visible, and the student clearly puts forth a genuine effort. However, this essay is problematic nonetheless. First, Student "X" does not have an existing thesis statement; therefore, the essay has no clear direction. Secondly, although there is idea generation, some of the ideas require further development for clarity. For example, where Student "X" writes "He explained to me why you must disinfect the body, secure the eyes, and seal the mouth," she does not share with the reader why the things she mentions must be done to the dead body. In addition, she does not explain to the reader who "He" is. Thirdly, Student "X" has a number of serious grammatical errors such as run-on sentences, fragmented sentences, and subject verb agreement. Student "X" was rightfully placed in TSE 098.

For the first formal essay in TSE 098, Student "X" was asked to write an essay based on the memoir, *Autobiography of a Face*, which the class had been reading. The assignment asked students to:

Write about an obstacle or unpleasant event or experience that resulted in personal growth for you. How has your identity been affected? How did you come to terms with the experience, and what did you ultimately learn from it? Reflect back on Grealy's memoir. How does her story make connections to you and your own life? With any kind of public writing, one must make a choice about what or how much one is willing to reveal. Your writing need not focus on something as painful as Lucy Grealy's battle with cancer, but choose an obstacle that you feel free to share.

The following essay is what Student "X" submitted as a rough draft, after working on it in class and outside of class for two weeks.

The Greatest Obstacle That I Have Faced

From the time we are born, until the time we leave this world there are going to be obstacles in our life. Coping with the out come may not be something you can just forget about the next day, once you are over it. Sometimes there is a remembrance of certain obstacles that stays with you for a life time. For example, an author named Lucy Grealy, who was diagnosed with a terminal cancer and had a third of her jaw removed. Knowing who you are and getting over each obstruction with out losing your self worth is the key to putting it behind you or learning to except the way things are. Every body is not tall, slim, have beautiful long hair, and with the most gorgeous face and skin there is. Most people take for granted what they have, like eyebrows, the ability to gain or loss weight freely and not worrying about one of your nourveous systems shuting

down a cell that performs a spcific duty. The greatest obstacle that I have faced in my life is being diagnosed with Alopecia at age five.

When I was a little girl my mom always said that I was going to break a lot of hearts. I was a very active little girl. I always tried to keep up with my tow older sisters. I had so many hobbies and sports that I was excellent in. We even to this day my mom has all of my medals, trophyies, certificates, and blakes on top of the fire place along with my Sisters. Every time someone comes over to visit they look down stairs and say How many brothers do you have and they must be very good athlete. My favorite was swimming, gymnastices, track, and ballet. When I was five my mom would brush my hair and with every stroke hair would be every where. At the time she did not worry about it because I had so much of it. My hair was like my father side of the family long, brunet, and pass our buttocks. Eventually, it started to come out like shredded pieces of paper all over the house.

One evening after a swim meet I went to take a shower and I pulled off my swim cap and a girl shouted that I was bald in the back. My mom took me home and told me don't worry she will take me to see my doctor. The next mourning I went to see Dr. Blane. He ran all kinds of tests on me to find out the cause of it. Latr that day we meet with a doctor name Dr. Gorzt who diagnosed me with Alopecia Areata. Alopecia is sudden hair loss in circular patches on the scalp. It is certain levels of it, which I happen to have the worst case. It is an emotional factor, which

can cause it, but you still have to be born with it. I do remember being upset because, he told me that once all of my hair was gone your hair was gone your eyebrows, ehelashes and no facial or body hair would grow. It took less than a weak for me to be completely bald. You could not tell if I was boy or a girl. Every day I whore caps that match my out fit.

I still continue to be on the swim team, but I would swim with a swim capon my head as if I had hair. A month later I went back to Dr. Gorzt and he told my mother and I that he could help me grow my hair back but the procedure was expensive. For five days a week I went to Dr. Gorzt office where my school bus dropped me off to receive the worst pain of my life. They punctured injections all over my head with medication that was mixed with protizons whic aso known as steroids. This treatment went on for about eight years, sometimes little patches of hair would grow and then fall right out. The medication was so harsh that it triple my body weight and damage apart of my center nervous systems which makes me sometimes shakes or stiffen my hands. I was blessed that it only effected my handwriting.

My mother introduced me to wigs. I hated them so much because they wer so ugly and my mom had the verve to buy me a Jerry curl wig. She even started to buy different styles for her self while I look like an idiot. I stop ballet, gymnastics, track and swimming because of my weight and how I looked. Since the medication was stron with topical steroids, I weighed three hundred pounds about time they determined there was

nothing they could do. Shcool was like battlefield earth, always fighting using foul language towards anyone who said something to me that was a wise crack. It really hurt meto be know though out scholl as the bald fat girl. Every time I stood up to read something in class, I would allow one minute of silence before reading so that every one could go ahead and let all there little jokes out.

When I was high school I realized that not having any hair is not the end of the world. I even went to John Cassablanca Modeling School where I learned how to put on makeup and chose the best wigs for me. I know no that people will be ignorant no matter what you look like. I stop stressing my self about it and just make things better and being depressed and angry at the world will not solve anything. I connected with Lucy Grealy on numbers of problems she had with people nad her family. I felted like Lucy, When she said no one will ever love her and she willnever date, but now I have a lot ex-boyfriends to prove that is defiantly not true. I still sometimes daydream but I learned if you continue to do that, life it self will pass you by.

The greatest obstacel in my life was Aopecia, But not any more. Life deals you all kind of cards and you just have to deal with them the best way you know who. My problem is small compared to others. I love myself and I know my self worth. People should relish all good energy or emotions and try to keep happy thoughts in your mind, because life can get worst.[3]

For this writing assignment, Student "X" seems to begin the essay with a lot of enthusiasm and potential. She has great ideas, and seems to tell her story, although a difficult one, with ease. This is an essay from a student that a basic writing instructor wants to be sure to encourage rather that discourage. Although Student "X" does generate good ideas, her paper is somewhat problematic. First, the assignment asks for her to address more in her essay than she actually does. Secondly, there are a number of grammatical, mechanical, and spelling errors. In addition, Student "X" has unclear topic sentences, and too many ideas existing in her paragraphs. With a conference, peer review, and revision, Student "X has the opportunity to improve this essay. The following is the revision that Student "X" submitted for this assignment.

The Greatest Obstacle That I Have Faced

From the time we are born, until the time we leave this world, there are going to be obstacles in our lives. Coping with the outcome may not be something you can just forget about the next day once you are over it. Sometimes there is a remembrance of certain obstacles that stay with you for a lifetime. For example, an author named Lucy Grealy, who was diagnosed with a terminal cancer and had a third of her jaw removed, dealt with her obstacle all her life. Knowing who you are and getting over each obstruction without losing your selfworth is the key to putting it behind you or learning to accept the way things are. Everybody is not tall, slim, or beautiful. Most people take for granted what they have, like eyebrows, the ability to gain or lose weight freely and not worrying about your nervous system reacting negatively to prescribed medication. The greatest

obstacle that I have faced in my life is being diagnosed with Alopecia at age five.

When I was a little girl, my mom always said that I was going to break a lot of hearts. I was a very active little girl. I always tried to keep up with my two older sisters. I had so many hobbies and sports that I was excellent in such as, swimming and ballet. Even to this day, my mom has all of my medals, trophies, certificates, and plaques on top of her fireplace along with my sister's. Everytime someone comes over to visit, they look downstairs and say "how many brothers do you have, and they must be very good athletes". My favorite was gymnastics and track.

When I was five, my mom would brush my hair and with every stroke, hair would be every where. At the time she did not worry about it because I had so much of it. My hair was like my father's side of the family, long, brunet, and past our buttocks. Eventually, it started to come out like shredded pieces of paper all over the house. My mother fixed all of my hairstyles in a straight or curly pony tail.

One evening after a swim meet, I went to take a shower and I pulled off my swim cap and a girl shouted that I was bald in the back. My mom took me home and told me not to worry, she would take me to see a doctor. The next morning, I went to see Dr. Blane. He ran all kinds of tests on me to find out the cause of it. Later that day, we met with a doctor named Dr. Gorzt who diagnosed me with Alopecia Areta. Alopecia is sudden hair loss in circular patches on the scalp. There are certain levels

of it, which I happen to have the worse case. There is an emotional factor, which can cause it, but you still have to be born with it.

I do remember being upset because he told me that once all of my hair had fallen out, my eyebrows, eyelashes and body hair would not grow. It took less than a week for me to be completely bald. You could not tell if I was a boy or a girl. Everyday I had on caps that matched my outfits.

I still continued to be on the swim team, but I would swim with a swim cap on my head as if I had hair. A month later, I went back to Dr. Gorzt and he told my mother and I that he could help me grow my hair back, but the procedure was expensive. For five days a week, I went to Dr. Gorzt's office where my school bus dropped me off to receive the worse pain of my life. They punctured injections all over my head with medication that was mixed with protizons which is also known as steroids. This treatment went on for about eight years.

Sometimes little patches of hair would grow and then fall right out. The medication was so harsh that it trippled my body weight and damaged apart of my central nervous system, which makes me sometimes shake or stiffen my hands. I was blessed that it only affected my handwritting.

My mother introduced me to wigs. I hated them so much because they were so ugly and my mom had the nerve to buy me a Jerry curl wig. She even started to buy different styles for herself while I looked like an

idiot. I stopped going to ballet, gymnastics, track, and swimming because of my weight. I was too fat. Since the medication was strong with topical steroids, Iweighed three hundred pounds about the time they determined there was nothing they could do.

School was like battlefield earth. I was always fighting and using foul language towards anyone who said something to me that was a wise crack. It really hurt me to be known throughout school as the bald fat girl. Everytime I stood up to read something in class, I would allow one minute of silence before reading so that everyone could go ahead and let all their little jokes out.

When I was in high school, I realized that not having any hair is not the end of the world. I even went to John Cassablanca Modeling School where I learned how to put on makeup and choose the best wigs for me. I know now that people will be ignorant no matter what I look like. I stopped stressing myself about it and just mad things better by believing in myself. Being depressed and angry at the world was not solving anything.

I connected with Lucy Grealy's memoir called Autobiography of a Face, on a number of problems she had with people and her family. I felt like Lucy when she said no one will ever love her and she will never date. I felt like that, but now I have a lot of ex-boyfriends to prove that this is not true. Lucy and I both let her face and my hair loss, define who we are.

I still sometimes daydream but I learned if you continue to do that, life itself will pass you by.

The greatest obstacle in my life was Alopecia, but not anymore. Life deals you all kinds of cards and you just have to deal with them the best way you know how. My problem is small compared to others. I love myself and I know myself worth. People should relish all good energy or emotions and try to keep happy thoughts in their minds because life can get worse.[4]

In this revision, Student "X" again writes a very heartfelt narrative regarding a quite difficult obstacle. The essay is indeed touching, and filled with wonderful idea generation. It is apparent that Student "X" has made some adjustments to her overall editing with grammar, mechanics, and spelling. Student "X" also has utilized her own obstacle in a way that conjoins with the author, is as the assignment required. Student "X" has, in addition, made improvements to her paragraph organization, and idea development. Although these are certainly good improvements from the rough draft, there is clearly still a problem with the student's essay. Student "X" has not really completed everything the assignment required. She does connect her experience with Alopecia to Grealy's experience with cancer; however, she has not stated clearly how her obstacle has impacted her identity. Student "X" addresses her identity somewhat near the end of the essay, but some further development is needed. However, despite some of Student "X's" shortcomings, there is definite improvement in the essay, therefore a grade of at least a "B" could be awarded to this student. It is important in any basic writing

course for an instructor to be consistent in applying encouragement where it is certainly deserved and required.

Computers in the Writing Classroom

In addition to establishing a Transitional Studies Department, paying attention to curriculum matters such as courses, syllabi, and effective writing assignments, it is also necessary to implement modern technology in the classroom through the use of computers. The latest reform movement visible in higher education in the United States has been the computer revolution. Computer technology offers the chance to transform writing classes into different kinds of centers of learning. When computers are utilized in the basic writing class, students have the opportunity to apply what has been instructed in class immediately. Because working on computers makes it so easy to revise an essay, it is probably the single most important use that computers have. When editing and revising occur, the student does not have to re-type his essay from the beginning. Instead, the process of revision becomes a smoother transition into the final product. According computer and writing expert Michael G. Southwell,

> Computers are an extremely powerful way to help students understand that writing is truly a process, that it requires different kinds of activities at different times. The ability to produce clean copy quickly and easily seems to encourage students to revise more thoughtfully and more thoroughly. [5]

Skeptics of computer classrooms may express concern that not all students have the same level of typing ability. Where this argument held more validity a few years ago, it certainly does not now. In today's ever-growing technology industry, more and more

students are computer literate; thousands of students log on to the Internet daily, and with "surfing the net" comes more interaction with computers and typing. In fact, a recent survey on technology in the classroom reported that "a majority of all college students and faculty now have some sort of recurring instructional experience with information technology resources and technology-based learning activities" ("Technology Revolution Goes to College").[6] Therefore, by the time students today sit in a writing class, their typing ability is sufficient enough to type essays at an acceptable speed. Michael Southwell argues that, "Teachers often fear that students' inability to type will have a deleterious effect on their use of computers, however, these fears are largely unfounded. Somehow, students manage, and seldom complain" (Southwell 585). Southwell further suggests that,

> Computers provide students with important psychological support. It has frequently been observed that students enjoy using computers for their writing and that they believe them to be beneficial. The common preconception is that computers are most appropriate for students at higher levels of composing skills, but the kind of support given by computers would seem to be particularly useful for developmental students. (588)

Critics of computer classrooms believe that the use of technology can exacerbate problems characteristic of American classrooms and must continue to seek ways of using technology to equally support all students in writing classes. According to another writing and technology expert, Raymond Rodrigues,

> In many English composition classes, computer use simply reinforces those traditional notions of education that permeate our culture at its most basic

> level; teachers talk, students listen. With new technology, these tendencies are played out in classrooms where students labor at isolated workstations on drill and practice grammar software, or in facilities where computers are arranged, rank and file, so that teachers can examine each computer screen at a moment's notice to check on what students are writing. What many in our profession have yet to realize is that electronic technology, unless it is considered carefully and used critically, can and will support any one of a number of negative pedagogical approaches that also grow out of our cultural values and our theories of writing. (18)

Although Rodrigues' opinion of computers in the classroom appears to be somewhat negative, computers utilized in composition classrooms does not have to be a negative experience. If careful planning is done, the computer classroom can be a positive experience for the basic writer. Many of the student's experience with a computer classroom is going to be determined by the creativity and enthusiasm of the instructor. If the instructor shows initiative, and makes the class interesting, the students will respond positively to the course, and have an opportunity to experience learning in a non-traditional forum. English instructors do not have to have a "military" approach to computers in the classroom, as author Raymond Rodrigues suggests. Using technology in the classroom is not equivalent to "boot-camp"; therefore. English teachers should not be parading around their computer classrooms "examining monitors at a moment's notice," nor should English teachers "arrange computers by rank and file," while drilling their students like technology soldiers. These are tactics of intimidation and have no place in a classroom. Furthermore, intimidation tactics defeat the purpose of a basic

writing environment. Basic writing courses are designed to help students feel at ease and comfortable about writing. The basic writing student's trust should be gained, not lost. According to composition and technology expert, Gail Hawisher,

> A computer classroom carefully designed can improve students' experience to different kinds of intellectual spaces in which they can learn differently and sometimes more effectively than in more traditional academic forums. Instructors can become better acquainted with their students; many of the status quos marking face-to-face discourse are eliminated, thus allowing for more egalitarian discourse, with greater attention to the text at hand. Collaborative activities increase along with a greater sense of community in computer-supported writing classes. [7]

Teaching in a computer classroom allows the opportunity for English teachers to break away from the traditional writing classroom since the computers create entirely new pedagogical dynamics, such as an English instructor's approach to reading rough drafts. Rather than collecting drafts, reading and then returning drafts, English instructors can read drafts right off the computer monitor and conference with their students immediately. Samples of student papers can be viewed by the entire class, with the use of a projector that is connected to an instructional computer. This method allows the entire class to engage in the writing processes collaboratively. Reviewing peer drafts with a projector is much more time effective than having a student go to the board and write parts of his essay.

Until the advent of computers, the time-consuming writing process was almost punitive in nature. With computers, the grueling and time-consuming task of editing and

rewriting have been substantially alleviated with software that allows students to manipulate, edit and review their text with ease. Using computers as the medium for teaching writing allows for a natural relationship between the pedagogical concerns of the writing curriculum and the desire of most students to use computers. Many basic writing students find writing to be the most challenging area of language. However, the motivational attraction of the computer encourages students to write and, with the revision processes minimized, students then have time to concentrate on the structural issues of writing.

Using the appropriate kind of computer software or hypermedia software, as it is commonly known, is also an important aspect of implementing computer use in the classroom. "Hypermedia software" refers to software that creates text which can be linked to other texts or graphics by clicking on buttons or on links. Software such as HyperCard, or PowerPoint enable hypermedia text construction. HyperCard for example is a compact piece of software for the MacIntosh computer which allows the user to create screen-sized documents with simple graphics and text on the screen. Buttons are selected by means of a mouse click to send readers to other screens in the larger document. The freedom to move freely within a document is what differentiates hypermedia software from word-processing software. Hypermedia documents allow instantaneous access to any part of the document, which enables readers to control texts that can both stand alone and be integral parts of the main text. Thematic structure is required for the complete document as well as smaller different sub-texts.

The separation of the main document into a number of smaller thematic sub-texts allows the English instructor and the students to concentrate on the structural issues of the

smaller texts. These sub-texts can be one paragraph while for a more advanced basic writer in TSE 099, texts may consist of two or more paragraphs. Paragraphs, as well as entire texts have specific structures; breaking the text down into a number of smaller sub-texts allows students to focus on the structural development of each paragraph. This is only one example of a type of computer software that can revolutionize basic writing instruction. Prior to the technology age, an English Instructor, as well as students, would never have had this option in the approach to teaching on learning writing. To develop coherence and meaningful development in essays, the basic writing student should be encouraged to spend considerable time brainstorming, outlining structure, writing drafts and editing drafts before the final draft. Computers should be implemented in the classroom in order for the remedial student to receive the most from the basic writing program.

The Writing Lab

In a Transitional Studies Department, the writing lab would function as an integral part of the writing program. The mission of the writing lab should include the following: to support the improvement of student writing at the college; to complement the classroom instruction of writing with student-centered, student-directed tutoring; to foster innovative links around composition and technology that empower student writers (primarily basic writers) and their sense of agency; and, to serve as the central resource on writing to students, faculty and the rest of the college community. Basically, the writing lab should provide remedial, tutorial, and editorial services, which enhance to writing courses. Students should come to the writing lab to work on their essay

assignments and when they need help with their papers. Faculty members can refer students, or students can come on their own. Students may need editorial assistance or help with the actual writing of the paper; however, the writing lab staff members should not write papers for students, but guide students through the process of composition and help them produce a better product.

Students who are enrolled in any of the Transitional Studies courses should be required, as part of their course grade, to go to the writing lab a certain number of days and times per week. Writing only improves when it is practiced. When Transitional Studies students arrive in the lab, each student should be handled individually and given adequate instruction about the lab and how to get things done. However, what may be recommended for one student may not be recommended for a different student. Writing strengths and weaknesses vary in students; therefore, Transitional Studies students should arrive in the writing lab with a writing sample. The writing sample should be read by a writing lab staff member, and diagnosed. Based on the diagnosis, a prescribed program of study aimed at eliminating particular writing problems and at producing good writing will be given. For example, if a particular student has been diagnosed as having problems creating thesis statements or topic sentences, the student would work with a tutor, and be given exercises relevant to the diagnosed problem each time he attends the writing lab; and with continuous practice, the exercises would help him master developing thesis statements and topic sentences. The overall objectives of the writing lab should be:

1. To increase the ability of students to organize and to express ideas effectively in oral and written work.

2. To help students develop, and use more effectively, principles of logical thinking.
3. To strengthen student's reading and speaking vocabulary.
4. To develop competency in the use of English mechanics by students.
5. To give support in writing to the Transitional Studies Department, and the entire college community.

Essentially, the writing lab should be a friendly setting that provides students with services to develop their academic writing skills. The writing lab should not be a place that provides simplistic proofreading services, but it should aim to identify and address problem areas to improve students' writing abilities. Each Transitional Studies student who arrives in the writing lab should be accompanied with a Referral Form (see sample Referral Form in Appendix D). On the referral form, English instructors should specifically indicate areas of a student's essays that need attention. The English instructor can also request on the referral form, certain exercises that a tutor should utilize while working with the student, in addition to indicating how frequently the student should go to the writing lab. Ultimately, the referral form is a way for English instructors to communicate with the tutors in the writing lab.

NOTES

[1] Lucy Grealy. *Autobiography of a Face.* New York: Harper Perennial. 1995. Memoir exploring self acceptance in the midst of adversity.

[2] The diagnostic writing sample that Student "X" was given revealed the initial writing weakness of Student "X". The time allotted for this writing sample was two hours.

[3] Student "X" submitted this rough draft after working on it in class and outside of class for two weeks. This essay assignment is entitled "Overcoming Obstacles."

[4] Student "X"'s revision of the "Overcoming Obstacles" essay after a teacher-student conference, and peer review.

[5] Michael Southwell. "Computers & Writing Instruction." *A Sourcebook for Basic Writing Teachers.* Ed. Theresa Enos. New York: Random House. 1987. Michael Southwell teaches English at York College, CUNY, and is a principal in DNEBA Enterprises. He is coauthor of the *Comp-Lab Exercises*, and designed and programmed the *Grammar Lab* Software. He is active as an author, lecturer, and consultant in the field of writing and computers.

[6] *USA Today.* "Technology Revolution Goes to College," April 1996, page 13.

[7] Hawisher, Gail. "The Rhetoric of Technology and the Electronic Writing Class." *College Composition and Communication, No. 42.* Feb 1991, pages 55-65.

CHAPTER VI

A SUMMARY OF STUDY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This study has examined the character and quality of basic writing programs at six selected Historically Black Colleges and the need to utilize writing programs to assist many college students who are essentially basic writers. There are critics who would like to deny the existence of the basic writer because any acknowledgement of the basic writer's existence means dealing with the student's inadequacies as well as the shortcomings of a failed educational system. In the previous discussions, the researcher traced the existence of the basic writer in America to a period as early as 1870 at Harvard University (see Mike Rose's article "The Language of Exclusion"), and mentioned that with the Higher Education Act of 1965, when open admission began across America, and colleges began admitting students who were not "traditional," the population of basic writers showing up on college campuses grew larger. Open admission policies were intended to reach a wider range of students who never would have had an opportunity to attend college. Open admission was in fact a good idea; however, colleges just never prepared for how to accommodate the basic writer who shows up on their campuses.

For many students, writing is psychological; students with poor writing abilities grew accustomed to their teachers' negative comments that they regularly find on their papers. The anticipation of rejection by the teacher causes the writing experience to

become psychological. With the anticipation of negative comments on their papers, basic writers often convince themselves that they cannot write, and therefore, put little effort into their writing assignments. In other words, the basic writers, in many cases, plan to fail rather than to succeed. As was previously mentioned, many opponents of remedial writing programs view such programs as a waste of time. Although the opponents admit that the basic writer exists, they maintain that the cost of running such programs is too expensive. States such as New York and California have already begun to phase out remedial education. The end result of this will be that many four-year colleges will be denying admission to many students who want a four-year college education. After admission doors at these colleges are closed to remedial students, and if remedial students still desire to attend college, they have only the option of attending a two-year college. However, when remedial students arrive at many two-year colleges, the community colleges also do not want them and they blame the high schools for producing the students in the first place. The vicious cycle continues, and no one wants to take responsibility for the basic writer.

In the discussion of the historical beginnings of Historically Black Colleges and Universities, the researcher observed that these schools were started because African Americans wanted to have control of their own education and did not want to leave the decisions regarding their education in the hands of white people any longer, so they decided to provide quality collegiate education to African Americans who would not have had the opportunity to attend college. The researcher also observed that after the Civil War, southern states were required by federal law to provide public education for all of their citizens, and this soon led to a "separate but equal" system of education at our

public universities. Integration started first with athletes. Athletes went to black colleges, as a way of paying for college. The traditionally white schools did not recruit those who could not be professional athletes. Eventually, in 1890, the nation's first 17 historically black land grant institutions were created; today, there are have a total of 104 Historically Black Colleges and Universities. If these institutions wish to truly educate many African-American young men and women who would be able to compete in the global economy, the basic writer must be at the center of attention for these institutions.

In order to discover what the institutions are doing to help the basic writer (i.e. students with writing deficiencies) this study examined writing programs at six Historically Black Colleges. Spelman College, Morehouse College, and Tougaloo College, were chosen as examples of colleges where the basic writer is not at the center of any serious attention. These colleges share a very rich history of educating African Americans across the country for over one hundred years. At one point in their history, these colleges had functioning basic writing programs, but due to political pressures from students, parents and the administration, these programs have been eliminated. None of these colleges deny the fact that the basic writer, who is in need of remediation, is still present in their student population; however, very little, if anything is done to help the basic writing students improve their writing deficiencies.

The other colleges whose writing programs were examined are Bethune-Cookman College, Oakwood College, and Morris Brown College. As with the previous three colleges, the latter group also shares a fairly impressive history of educating African Americans in higher education for over a century. Many of the affluent and prominent African Americans in the United States have graduated from some of these colleges.

However, unlike Spelman, Morehouse, and Tougaloo where remedial writing is not supported, Betuhune-Cookman, Oakwood and Morris Brown, on the other hand, fully support basic writing programs. The latter group of colleges acknowledges the fact that they have remedial writing students in their student population, and that it is their responsibility to assist them in becoming better writers. This is accomplished through basic writing classes that specifically target the needs of the basic writer, and the students are taught at a pace that is conducive to learning. These basic writing classes are complemented with writing labs that offer tutoring, and additional assistance in writing. The results of these basic writing classes, as we explained in chapter four, have been quite beneficial to the students.

Although Spelman College does not currently have a basic writing program, at some point in its history it had such a program that was housed in its English Department. At Spelman College, many English professors believe that because of their high admission standards, they are immune to having remedial level students gracing their campus. As a matter of fact, only 1% of Spelman's English faculty supports remediation for their students in the area of writing (see Appendix E, Table 6). However, through our present study, we have observed that despite the stringent admission policy at Spelman College, remedial students are still present at the college. Spelman's decision to terminate its remedial writing program was for the sake of convenience. When Spelman had a remedial writing program, the students resented the courses, the faculty disliked teaching the courses, and parents complained that their children had to take remedial courses. Nonetheless, the omission of the program failed to omit the existence of the basic writing student.

Morehouse College currently is not a supporter of remedial education. As with Spelman, Morehouse College also had a remedial writing program that was housed in the English Department. The fact that Morehouse previously offered remedial assistance with writing suggests that the college, like Spelman, did acknowledge in the past the existence of basic writers. Although 20% of its English faculty currently favors a remedial writing program for their students (see Appendix E, Table 8), however, Morehouse College seems to be aware that not all students entering its first year classes share the same strengths in their writing. As previously mentioned in chapter two, some students struggle with writing for various reasons that range from writing anxiety, assignment intimidation, and a preconceived idea that failure is inevitable. Nonetheless, Morehouse College terminated its remedial writing program as recently as two years ago. As with Spelman, the termination of the remedial writing program has not terminated the existence of the basic writer at Morehouse. Many students who really need remedial instruction but have enrolled in the standard ENG 101 courses at Morehouse might be failing simply because they are in a course that does not cater to their academic needs.

Tougaloo College follows the same path as Spelman and Morehouse; it also had a remedial writing program, but elected to omit the program. Just as with Spelman and Morehouse, Tougaloo College received pressure from disgruntled parents who disliked the fact that their children tested into remedial writing classes. Tougaloo also experienced disgruntled faculty members who were offended when asked to teach remedial writing courses. Eighty percent of the English faculty is currently opposed to a remedial writing program (see also Appendix E, Table 6). These faculty members did not see any value in remedial instruction and believed that teaching remedial writing was

somewhat demeaning. Nonetheless, Tougaloo has students on its campus who require remedial education. Unfortunately for these remedial students, they are not getting the attention they require. Tougaloo, like Spelman and Morehouse, simply place its remedial students in ENG 101 courses, and hopes for the best. However, for students needing remedial instruction, enrolling in ENG 101 is not what is best for them. If the remedial students still exist, logic dictates that so should the remedial program.

Contrary to what Spelman, Morehouse, and Tougaloo Colleges are doing with regard to remedial writing, Bethune-Cookman College supports remedial writing for its students. Bethune-Cookman appears to have a more realistic program for remedial writing. First, the college acknowledges and accepts the fact that basic writing students are part of the population at historically black colleges, and then designs basic writing classes specifically intended to strengthen poor writing skills in remedial students. These classes move at just the correct pace so that the basic writing student does not feel overwhelmed. The pace of a basic writing class is much slower than a standard ENG 101. Students in basic writing classes receive more individual attention with their assignments, and are given more time to complete assignments. Most importantly, students in basic writing courses have opportunity to revise essays for as long as possible. Bethune-Cookman also has many supportive faculty members who believe in the basic writing program and the basic writing student. Eighty percent of the faculty interviewed support the program (see Appendix E, Table 6). This significant level of support from the English faculty is present because the faculty sees the positive results of their efforts. Therefore, the teaching efforts of the faculty are not wasted. True, there may be remedial

students who are not too pleased with having to take basic writing courses, however, the final product is one that ultimately benefits the basic writing student.

Oakwood College supports remedial writing instruction, as does Bethune-Cookman College. Oakwood College has very high expectations about writing from their students. In fact, before students can even graduate from Oakwood College, they must be able to pass the English Proficiency Exam. Any candidate for graduation must be able to prove his or her competency in the area of writing. As a consequence of its commitment to high standards in writing, Oakwood College offers remedial courses designed specifically to assist basic writers in composition. Once the basic writing student successfully passes the remedial writing course, and the exit essay examination, the basic writing student is able to progress to English 101. The success of Oakwood's remedial writing program is remarkable. Ninety percent of its faculty supports remediation in college writing (see Appendix E, Table 6). As previously mentioned in chapter four, the basic writing students who progress to English 101 have noticeable changes in their writing.

Morris Brown College is yet another supporter of remedial writing programs. The college accepts that it has students on its campus who do not have a clear understanding of writing. The college therefore seeks to assist these basic writing students so that they can be legitimate participants in the world of academia. Similarly to Bethune-Cookman and Oakwood, Morris Brown has remedial writing courses that basic writing students must successfully pass with a grade of "C" or better in order to move to English 101. In addition to the remedial writing courses, students also have available to them the writing lab and tutors. As previously discussed in chapter four, Morris Brown

faculty are able to notice significant improvements in the writing of these basic writing students just from the basic writing courses alone. What keeps the basic writing program functioning at Morris Brown, Bethune-Cookman, and Oakwood is the fact that the program works. The one common goal that these three colleges share is their commitment to remedial education, and their students. The support for remedial writing by Morris Brown is comparable to that found among the Oakwood faculty (also 90%). These colleges understand that the word "remedial," contrary to popular belief, does not (and should not) necessarily reflect negatively on a college; any program bearing such a name simply reflects the realities of the world.

Overall, this research indicates that 55% of the six hundred students who participated in this study at the selected Historically Black Colleges find that their writing abilities are lacking. This study further indicates that out of the 55% of students who have difficulty with writing, approximately 85% of this group of students would be willing to take remedial writing classes if their colleges offered the courses. The participating students also acknowledge that a regular English 101 course often moves a bit too quickly. This group of students seems to be aware that they do not have strong writing skills but have never properly been offered a solution through a writing course.

It was also revealed from this research that 80% of the students who are currently receiving remedial writing instruction from the selected Historically Black Colleges that offer remedial writing courses, are satisfied with the instruction of the courses. This group of students is aware that their writing abilities are somewhat poor, and they welcome the extra attention, and slower pace that they receive in their remedial writing courses.

Of the sixty faculty members who participated in this research, roughly 63% believe that students can benefit from remedial writing instruction. This study indicates that even for many faculty members who support remedial education, some of them do not like the negative connotation associated with the word "remedial." It is their belief that the word "remedial" operates in a detrimental way to one's self-esteem and self-worth. According to these educators, political correctness has caused people to steer clear of labels and terminologies that may psychologically derail a person's self-confidence even when the person needs a basically foundational type of course in college writing.

These participating faculty members also believe that most of their English 101 courses are over-crowded, which inhibits effective writing instruction. They agree that in a smaller environment such as a remedial writing course, students who do have difficulty with writing can be attended to with more of a one-on-one atmosphere. Most of these participating English faculty have taught remedial writing at some point in their careers, therefore, they are able to identify the vast difference in a course being taught with remedial instruction versus a course being taught as a standard English 101 class.

The recommendation of this research is that basic writing programs should be implemented at all Historically Black Colleges. The implementation process discussed in chapter five is a good model that could be adopted by these colleges. The basic writing program itself will prove to be cost effective through the cost of tuition; afterall, students would be required to pay for basic writing courses just as they pay for any other classes. Since the Transitional Studies Department would function as an independent department, its budget should be separate from the English Department's. In addition to

being separate from the English Department, the Transitional Studies Department should aggressively seek funding through grants. Many Historically Black Colleges currently receive government funding such as Title III. As a matter of fact, Spelman College is one such school; therefore, the funding for basic writing programs should be included in the colleges' grant applications.

Program implementation is an intricate part of successfully teaching basic writing courses. As discussed in chapter five, in order for a basic writing program to flourish, it must exist in a department of its own. A home for a basic writing program can be achieved at any historically black college by establishing a Department of Transitional Studies. The Transitional Studies Department would support the English and other Undergraduate Studies Departments by identifying students who are not academically prepared to do well in college level writing courses, and offering instruction in the relevant area(s). The Transitional Studies Department would also prepare students for the "transition" to the General Education Core Curriculum through the offering of learning enhancement courses. In addition, the Department should provide advisement and academic support for basic writing students and provisionally admitted students.

The offering of courses in the Transitional Studies Department should have a strong emphasis on writing. Some of these courses could be titled TSE 098 Writing Fundamentals, TSE 099 Introduction to Composition, TSR 098 Practical College Reading, and TSR 099 Critical Reading and Thinking (see Appendix A). Reading comprehension is an essential part of writing, therefore, two reading courses should be taught to accompany the two writing courses that are offered to remedial students.

Thoughtful and well-constructed syllabi are necessary in order for English instructors to articulate to students the course expectations, and other pertinent information (see Appendix A for syllabi samples). In addition to well-constructed syllabi, lesson plans are essential tools for the basic writing English instructor in order to be completely prepared to teach a specific course content as effectively as possible. Lesson plans should be thorough; they should explain expected outcomes, classroom activities, learning materials, and method of teacher evaluation. Lastly, each course taught in the Transitional Studies Department should include effective assignments. Students respond better to writing assignments when they are challenging, creative, interesting, and current.

Sample student essays were discussed in chapter five to demonstrate the improvement in writing from a student who was in a basic writing program receiving appropriate assistance. The improvements in the Student "X" essays are quite noticeable, and it is reasonable to assume that these improvements probably would not have been achieved without the assistance of basic writing courses. The Transitional Studies Department should also have a writing lab, where basic writing students should be able to receive one-on-one tutoring and access to computers, or any other supportive assistance they may need with their writing.

The debate over remedial education is one that continues. Opponents as well as supporters of remedial education will surely agree that education is an important agent of development for the individual and for the society at large. Therefore, everything possible should be done to educate the maximum number of people possible. When students are doing poorly in college writing, one cannot simply cast blame elsewhere by

insisting that students' needs are not being met at the high school or middle school level. The literacy rates of high school graduates in the United States began to deteriorate in the mid-1960s, which resulted in the matriculation of a large number of college students with inadequate basic skills. A Post-Secondary International Network study claims that between 50% and 70% of university and college students in the United States need remedial and developmental support. Although community colleges have enrolled the majority of under prepared students, these students also exist on four-year college campuses. Many argue that inadequate high school standards and programs, coupled with a lack of parental concern and support, are responsible for students' poor performance and that those institutions should therefore be solely responsible for remediation. Others believe that developmental education properly belongs in adult schools, the private sector, or on-the-job training programs. Every educational institution should provide some level of assistance to basic writers or students with writing deficiencies. It matters not where they are found.

APPENDIX A

SYLLABI

TSE 098: Writing Fundamentals
HB College
Syllabus

Instructor: Nicolette Rose
Office: LB 302
Office Phone: (404) 555-1212
Email: nrose@hbc.edu
Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 2:00-5:00PM
And By Appointment
Course Time: Tuesday and Thursday 1:00-3:00PM

Texts

Albom, Mitch. *Tuesdays With Morrie.* (New York: Double Day, 1997)
Grealy, Lucy. *Autobiography of a Face.* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1995)
McWhorter, Kathleen. *The Writer's Compass.* Second Edition. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999)

Supplies

In addition to the textbooks listed above, you will need a computer disk for the work that you type in the writing lab. All work that is submitted will be typed. You will also need a standard sized composition notebook for your journal, and a good college-level dictionary.

Prerequisites

In order to be eligible to take TSE 098, students must have taken the placement test.

Course Description/Rationale

The Course TSE 098, is the first component of a two-semester composition course. The course will emphasize: understanding sentence structure, reviewing grammar extensively, sharpening proofreading and editing skills, developing paragraphs and essays with clearly expressed main ideas, and providing support suing examples, explanations, and other methods.

Course Objectives

Students in TSE 098 will accomplish the following:

1. Recognize and write sentences consistent with the patterns of standard written English.

2. Proofread and edit personal work and the work of others' writing by recognizing and correcting errors in mechanics and grammar to conform to standard written English conventions.

3. Write well organized paragraphs and essays with effective transitions.

4. Develop paragraphs focused on clearly written main ideas in paragraphs, including examples, explanations, concrete details, reasons, and other methods.

Core Outcomes

1. Strengthen skills in oral proficiency and presentation.

2. Strengthen skills in understanding connections in writing.

3. Enhance ability to do peer responding.

4. Develop skills in paragraph and essay development.

5. Strengthen skills in proofreading and editing.

6. Strengthen skills in paragraph development.

Teaching Methodology/Strategies

This class will facilitate the needs of the students in the basic levels of writing. The assignments created for this course will not only facilitate a learning experience, but an interesting one. The writing assignments are designed to encourage creativity and reflection on writing at a collegiate level. Most of the assignments contain three (3) elements that are essential. These elements are:

1. Specify the content
2. Reflection on reading and personal experiences
3. Give the assignments some creative insight

Course Requirements

A writing journal is required for this course. In it students will record their responses to the readings for the class, any questions about the texts we read and ideas we discuss, and connections among the texts. Students will receive credit for keeping a journal, and journals will be collected at the end of the semester. However, this does not mean that students should not keep current with all journal assignments. Random journal checks are possible, so students should have journals current, and bring them to class for every class meeting. Students are expected to bring textbooks to class each class session, and be prepared to discuss material assigned by the instructor. Some class time will be spent discussing, analyzing, and interpreting the assigned works. Unannounced quizzes on assigned readings from all books count for a percentage of the final course grade. Class time is not an appropriate time to "catch-up" on your reading. If you have not read the assigned work, then you will have nothing to offer in the class discussions.

Student Evaluations

Students enrolled in this course will be evaluated on their quality of writing and knowledge of the topics. They will also be evaluated on their competency on the assigned work, and final examination. The grade percentages are as follows:

60% - Essays
20% - Final Examination
10% - In-class work/homework
10% - Journal

Grading Scale

90-100 = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
Below = F

Teacher Evaluation

Every student has the right to complete a teacher evaluation at the completion of any course. This course does comply with the teacher evaluation policy of the institution. The students complete the evaluations anonymously. The instructor of the course is not present in the classroom while students complete evaluations. The evaluations are then placed in an envelope and sealed. They are then taken to the Transitional Studies department by a student, and given to the department secretary. The director of Developmental Studies, Dr. Wilma Taylor, reads all teacher evaluations. After final grades have been submitted to the registrar, faculty are given the evaluations for the current semester, and asked to review them. Teacher evaluations are pertinent in helping the faculty improve and continue teaching excellence.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend classes regularly and punctually. If a student misses a class, it is the student's responsibility to find out what assignments were given and when they are due, as well as any other important information that transpired during the missed class. Excessive absences can result in failure of this course.

Late Work and Makeup Work

Late work is not encouraged, nor is it accepted. Students are expected to turn in all assignments on time. All assignments are to be done to the specifications outlined by the instructor.

In order to pass TSE 098, a grade of "C" or better must be earned.

Outline of Course Content

Th 3 June	Course Introduction and Orientation
Tu 8 June	Diagnostic writing sample.
Th 10 June	Review writing process, and complete Writer's Resume.
Tu 15 June	Read chapter 1 in textbook, pp. 1-12, and read Cosby, "The Way it Was," p. 13; Hughes and Kapoor, "How to Become a Millionaire," p. 95, and complete journal questions at the end of readings.
Th 17 June	Read pp. 1-52 in *Autobiography of a Face*. Complete journal questions for *AOF*. Class discussion on reading.
Tu 22 June	Read chapter 2, pp. 18-39 and read Rosemond, "The Job isn't for Wimps," p. 40; Kahn, "The Discovery of Coca-Cola," p. 433, and complete journal questions.
Th 24 June	**Last day to withdraw without academic penalty**. Read pp. 53-139 in AOF. Complete journal questions for *AOF*. Class discussion on reading.
Tu 29 June	Read Walker, "Beauty: When the Other Dancer is Self," Salas, "Born in the USA," p. 336. Complete journal questions, and receive assignment on narration essay.
Th 1 July	Read pp. 140-175 in *AOF*. Complete journal questions. Class discussion on reading.
Tu 6 July	Continue working on narrative essay. Read chapter 3 pp. 48-76; Smith, "John Corcoran – The Man Who Couldn't Read," p. 71; and complete journal questions.
Th 8 July	Read pp. 176-223 in *AOF* and complete journal questions. Class discussion on reading.
Tu 13 July	Continue working on narrative essay. Rough drafts due. Complete peer evaluations and review.
Th 15 July	Do in-class essay. Read chapter 11 pp. 267-288; Pogrebin, "Superstitious Minds," p. 288; Rooney, "How to Put off Doing a Job," p. 438; and complete journal questions. **Narrative essay due.** Receive assignment for Informative Essay.

Tu 20 July	Read pp. 1-54 in *Tuesdays With Morrie* and complete journal questions. Class discussion on reading.
Th 22 July	Rough draft due. Complete peer evaluations. Read pp. 55-122 in *TWM.* Class discussion on reading.
Tu 27 July	Read pp. 123- 163 in TWM, and complete journal questions. Class discussion on reading.
Th 29 July	Read pp. 164-192 in *TWM* and complete journal questions. Class discussion on reading.
Tu 3 August	**Final Examination. Informative Essay and journals due.**

TSE 099: Introduction to Composition
HB College
Syllabus

Professor: Nicolette Rose
Office LB 302
Office Phone: (404) 555-1212
Email: nrose@hbc.edu
Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 2:00-5:00PM
And By Appointment
Course Time: Tuesday and Thursday 8:00-10:00AM

Text

Angelou, Maya. *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings.* (New York: Bantam Books, 1969)
Fawcett, Susan & Sandberg, Alvin. *Evergreen: A Guide to Writing.* Sixth Edition. (New York City: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999)
Tan, Amy. *The Joy Luck Club,* (New York: Ivy Books, 1989)

Supplies

In addition to the textbooks listed above, you will need a computer disk for the work that you type in the writing lab. All work that is submitted will be typed. You will also need a standard sized composition notebook for your journal, and a good college-level dictionary.

Prerequisites

In order to be eligible to take TSE 099, students must have taken TSE 098 or the placement test.

Course Description/Rationale

The Course TSE 099, is the second component of a two-semester composition course. The course is designed to help students become legitimate participants in the discourse of the academic community by acknowledging, respecting, and nurturing the considerable knowledge of and facility with language the student already possesses. In other words, the course will use the language that you know as a bridge to understanding the language of academic discourse. This course is designed to help students prepare for college level English. The course will emphasize: understanding audience, developing and organizing paragraphs and essays, using transitions, and revising and improving grammar and proofreading skills. Through a variety of reading and writing experiences, you will be able to communicate with the academic community on your own terms, not with the false persona or voice of the outsider, but with the clear, confident authentic speech of one who belongs.

Course Objectives
Students in TSE 099 will accomplish the following:

1. Write with the reader in mind.

2. Write paragraphs and essays focused around clear main ideas.

3. Write well organized paragraphs and essays with effective transitions.

4. Recognize and correct grammar and mechanics errors to conform to standard written English conventions.

Core Outcomes
1. Strengthen skills in oral proficiency and presentation.

2. Strengthen skills in understanding connections in reading, writing, and daily life.

3. Enhance ability to do peer responding.

4. Develop superior analytical skills in paragraph and essay development.

5. Develop a creative appreciation for reading and understanding texts.

Teaching Methodology /Strategies
Students come into courses with widely differing academic abilities and experiences. Often they are just learning to deal with a new level of academic challenge, which can range from difficult subject matter to more reading and homework. This course has a demanding audience to teach, nonetheless, this class will facilitate the needs of the students. The assignments created for this course will not only facilitate a learning experience, but an interesting one. The writing assignments are designed to encourage creativity, critical thinking, and reflection on a collegiate level. Most of the assignments contain three (3) elements that are essential. These elements are:

1. Specify the content
2. Suggest or identify some prewriting stimuli
3. Give the assignments some rhetorical context

Course Requirements
A writing journal is required for this course. In it, you will record your responses to the readings for the class, your questions about the texts we read, ideas we discuss, and connections among the texts. You will receive credit for deepening a journal, and journals will be collected at the end of the semester. However, this does not mean that students should not keep current with all journal assignments. Random journal checks are possible, so students should have journals current, and in class every class meeting. Students are expected to bring textbooks to class each class session, as well as be prepared to discuss material assigned by professor. Some class time will be spent

discussing, analyzing, and interpreting the assigned works. Unannounced quizzes on assigned readings from all books count for a percentage of your final course grade. Class time is not an appropriate time to "catch-up" on your reading. If you have not read the assigned work, then you will have nothing to offer in the class discussions.

Student Evaluations

Students enrolled in this course will be evaluated on their quality of writing and knowledge of the topics. They will also be evaluated on their competency on the assigned work, and final examination. The grade percentages are as follows:

60% - Essays
20% - Final Examination
10% - In-class work/homework
10% - Journal

Grading Scale

90-100 = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
Below = F

Teacher Evaluation

Every student has the right to complete a teacher evaluation at the completion of any course. This course does comply with the teacher evaluation policy of the institution. The students complete the evaluations anonymously. The instructor of the course is not present in the classroom while students complete evaluations. The evaluations are then placed in an envelope and sealed. They are then taken to the Transitional Studies department by a student, and given to the department secretary. The director of Transitional Studies, Dr. William Taylor, reads all teacher evaluations. After final grades have been submitted to the registrar, faculty are given the evaluations for the current semester, and asked to review them. Teacher evaluations are pertinent in helping the faculty improve and continue teaching excellence.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend classes regularly and punctually. If a student misses a class, it is the student's responsibility to find out what assignments were given and when they are due, as well as any other important information that transpired during the missed class. Excessive absences can result in failure of this course.

Late Work and Makeup Work

Late work is not encouraged, nor is it accepted. Students are expected to turn in all assignments on time. All assignments are to be done to the specifications outlined by the instructor.

In order to pass TSE 099, a grade of "C" or better must be earned.

Outline of Course Content

Th 3 June	Course Introduction and Orientation, Diagnostic writing sample, review writing process.
Tu 8 June	Read chapter 1&2 in textbook pp. 3-17. Complete Writer's Resume. Read chapter 1-10 in *Caged Bird*, and complete journal questions.
Th 10 June	Read Cisneros, "Only Daughter," p. 494; Ashe, "My Outing," p. 497; Jackson, "The Lottery," read chapter 6 on Narration pp. 77-84. Read chapters 11-20 in *Caged Bird* and complete journal questions.
Tu 15 June	Read "The Guest Word," from Virginia Woolf's *Moments of Being* (hand-out). Receive assignment for Narrative essay. Read chapters 21-30 in *Caged Bird*, and complete journal questions. Class discussion on reading.
Th 17 June	Continue working on narrative essay. Read chapters 31-35 in *Caged Bird* and complete journal questions. Class discussion on reading.
Tu 22 June	**Rough drafts due**. Peer reviews. Continue working on narrative essay.
Th 24 June	**Narrative essay due**. Read Britt, "Neat People Versus Sloppy People," p. 502; Quindlen, "Some Thoughts About Abortion," p. 517; Cofer, "One More Lesson," p. 522. Complete journal questions. Class discussion on readings.
Tu 29 June	Receive assignment for Comparison/Contrast essay. Read pp. 1-63 in *The Joy Luck Club*. Complete journal questions. Class discussion on reading.
Th 1 July	Continue working on comparison/contrast essay. Read pp. 64-160 in *JLC*. Complete journal questions. Class discussion on reading.
Tu 6 July	**Rough drafts due**. Peer reviews. Read pp. 161-240 in *JLC*, and complete journal questions. Class discussion on reading.
Th 8 July	**Comparison/Contrast essay due**. Read McGinnis, "How to Get

	the Most Out of Yourself," p. 504; Baker, "The Plot Against People," p. 531; Ferguson, "Road Rage," p. 533. Complete journal questions on readings.
Tu 13 July	Read pp. 241-337 in JLC, and complete journal questions. Class discussion on reading. Read chapter 12 in textbook on Cause and Effect essay. Receive assignment for Cause and Effect essay.
Th 15 July	Continue working on Cause and Effect essay
Tu 20 July	In-class essay (preparation for final examination)
Th 22 July	**Rough draft due** for Cause and Effect essay. Peer reviews.
Tu 27 July	**Cause and Effect essay due**. In-class essay.
Th 29 July	**Journals due**. Review for the final examination.
Tu 3 August	**Final Examination**.

TSR 098: Practical College Reading
HB College
Syllabus

Professor: Nicolette Rose
Office: LB 302
Office Phone: (404) 555-1212
Email: nrose@hbc.edu
Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 2:00-5:00PM
And By Appointment
Course Time: Tuesday and Thursday 11:00AM-1:00PM

Texts

Flemming, Laraine. *Reading For Thinking*. Third Edition. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000)

Lawn, Beverly. *The Short Story: 30 Masterpieces*. Second Edition. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992)

Course Description/Rationale

This transitional reading course prepares students for college-level reading and critical thinking by improving basic reading comprehension skills through practice and critical analysis. This course is designed to enable students to become more efficient and proficient in their reading and critical thinking skills.

Course Objectives

Students in TSR 098 will accomplish the following:

1. Practice vocabulary improvement skills.
2. Recognize main ideas in paragraphs and essays.
3. Recognize various methods of support in readings.
4. Comprehend literal meaning of readings.

Core Outcomes

1. Interpret meaning in readings beyond the literal.
2. Summarize readings accurately and clearly.
3. Evaluate support in persuasive reading.

4. Strengthen skill in critical thinking and reading.

Teaching Methodology/Strategies

Students come into courses with widely differing academic abilities and experiences. Often they are just learning to deal with a new level of academic challenge, which can range from more difficult subject matter to more reading and homework. This course has a unique audience to teach, nonetheless, this class will facilitate the needs of the students. The assignments created for this course will not only facilitate a learning experience, but an interesting one. The reading and writing assignments are designed to encourage creativity, critical thinking, and reflection on a collegiate level. Most of the assignments contain three (3) elements that are essential. These elements are:

1. Specify the content
2. Evaluate the readings
3. Give the assignments some rhetorical context

Course Requirements

To successfully complete this course, you must complete all required work and adhere to the following rules: Bring required texts and supplies to each class. Do required reading before class and knowledgeably participate in class discussions. Some class time will be spent discussing, analyzing, and interpreting the assigned works. Unannounced quizzes on assigned readings from both books are always a possibility. Class time is not an appropriate time to "catch- up" on your reading. If you have not read the assigned work, then you will have nothing to offer in the class discussions.

Student Evaluations

Students enrolled in this course will be evaluated on their competency on the assigned work, and final examination. The grade percentages are as follows:

25% - Homework/Quizzes
25% - Short Story Responses
25% - Reading Analyses/Writings
25% - Final Examination

Grading Scale

90-100 = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
Below = F

Teacher Evaluation

Every student has the right to complete a teacher evaluation at the completion of any course. This course does comply with the teacher evaluation policy of the institution. The students complete the evaluations anonymously. The professor of the course is not present in the classroom while students complete evaluations. The evaluations are then placed in an envelope and sealed. They are then taken to the Transitional Studies department by a student, and given to the department secretary. The director of Transitional Studies, Dr. Wilma Taylor, reads all teacher evaluations. After final grades have been submitted to the registrar, faculty are given the evaluations for the current semester, and asked to review them. Teacher evaluations are pertinent in helping the faculty improve and continue teaching with excellence.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend classes regularly and punctually. If a student misses a class, it is the student's responsibility to find out what assignments were given and when they are due, as well as any other important information that transpired during the missed class. Excessive absences can result in failure of this course.

Late Work and Makeup Work

Late work is not encouraged, nor is it accepted. Students are expected to turn in all assignments on time. All assignments are to be done to the specifications outlined by the professor.

In order to pass TSR 098, a grade of "C" or better must be earned.

Outline of Course Content

Th 3 June	Course Introduction and Orientation
Tu 8 June	Reading Sample
Th 10 June	Read chapter 1 "Strategies for Academic Achievement" in *Reading for Thinking*. Complete exercises at the end of the chapter. Class discussion on chapter 1.
Tu 15 June	Read "The Rocking-Horse Winner" by D.H. Lawrence in *The Short Story* pp. 159-174. Complete short story response, quiz and analysis.
Th 17 June	Read chapter 2 "Reviewing Paragraph Essentials" in *Reading for Thinking*. Complete exercises at the end of the chapter. Class discussion on chapter 2.
Tu 22 June	Read "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" by Ernest Hemingway in The Short Story pp. 200-204. Complete short story response, quiz and

	analysis.
Th 24 June	Read Chapter 3 "Power Tools for Learning" in *Reading for Thinking.* Complete exercises at the end of the chapter. Class discussion on chapter 3.
Tu 29 June	Read "King of the Bingo Game" by Ralph Ellison in *The Short Story* pp. 252-261. Complete short story response, quiz and analysis.
Th 1 July	Read Chapter 4 "Beyond Paragraphs" in *Reading for Thinking.* Complete exercises at the end of the chapter. Class discussion on chapter 4.
Tu 6 July	Read " The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson in *The Short Story* pp. 262-270. Complete short story response, quiz and analysis.
Th 8 July	Read chapter 5 "Summarizing and Synthesizing" in Reading for Thinking. Complete exercises at the end of the chapter. Class discussion on chapter 5.
Tu 13 July	Read "The Crowd" by Ray Bradbury in *The Short Story* pp. 271-280. Complete short story response, quiz and analysis.
Th 15 July	Read chapter 6 "Reading Between the Lines" in *Reading for Thinking.* Complete exercises at the end of the chapter. Class discussion on chapter 6.
Tu 20 July	Read "Sonny's Blues" by James Baldwin in *The Short Story* pp. 281-312. Complete short story response, quiz, and analysis.
Th 22 July	Read chapter 7 "Fact vs. Opinion" in *Reading for Thinking.* Complete exercises at the end of the chapter. Class discussion on chapter 7.
Tu 27 July	Read "Two Kinds" by Amy Tan in *The Short Story* pp. 413-424. Complete short story response, quiz, and analysis.
Th 29 July	Read chapter 8 "Identifying Purpose and Tone" in *Reading for Thinking.* Complete exercises at the end of the chapter. Review for final examination.
Tu 3 August	**Final Examination**

TSR 099: Critical Reading and Thinking
HB College
Syllabus

Professor: Nicolette Rose
Office LB 302
Office Phone (404) 555-1212
Email: nrose@hbc.edu
Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 2:00-5:00PM
And By Appointment
Course Time: Tuesday and Thursday 4:00-6:00PM

Text

Chaffee, John. *Thinking Critically*. Sixth Edition. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000)

Supplies

In addition to the textbook listed above, you will need a computer disk for the work that you type in the writing. All work that is submitted will be typed. You will also need a standard sized composition notebook for your Current Events Log. In the Current Events Log, you will locate, read and cut out two (2) articles from the newspaper each week for class. One of the articles you choose must be from the first section of the newspaper (national and international news), but the second article can be from any other section you choose. You will then write a summary of the article in your own words, making sure to discuss all the important points in the article. In addition, you will be required to analyze the content of the article and discuss the author's purpose and intent. The newspaper articles will be kept stapled in your notebook. Every article summary/analysis will be at least two (2) typed pages.

Prerequisites

In order to be eligible to take TSR 099, students must have taken TSR 098 or passed the placement test.

Course Description/Rationale

This course is designed to develop the student's critical thinking abilities through a variety of literary, academic, and journalistic writings. The student will look at contemporary issues from varying perspectives and will practice evaluating evidence and supporting opinions logically. The readings and assignments will challenge the student to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize ideas from a variety of sources and to question his or her own views in light of new information.

Course Objectives

Students in TSR 099 will accomplish the following:

1. Read and understand varying perspectives on contemporary issues.
2. Analyze and evaluate evidence.
3. Synthesize information from a variety of sources.
4. Reach logical conclusions based on information

Course Outcomes

1. Support views in writing.
2. Question views critically.
3. Enhance ability to read and analyze information critically.
4. Develop an appreciation for varying perspectives on contemporary issues.

Teaching Methodology/Strategies

Students come into courses with widely differing academic abilities and experiences. Often they are just learning to deal with a new level of academic challenge, which can range from more difficult subject matter to more reading and homework. This course will facilitate the needs of the students. The assignments created for this course will not only facilitate a learning experience, but an interesting one. The assignments are designed to encourage creativity, critical thinking, and reflection on a collegiate level. Most of the assignments contain three (3) elements that are essential. These elements are:

1. Analyze material
2. Evaluate and synthesize ideas from different sources
3. Question views

Course Requirements

You must complete all required work and adhere to the following rules to successfully complete this course: (1) Bring required texts and supplies to each class. (2) Keep a current events log notebook. (3) Do required reading and knowledgeably participate in class discussions. Some class time will be spent discussing and analyzing the assigned works. Class time is not an appropriate time to "catch-up" on your assignments. If you have not done the assignments, then you will have nothing to offer in the class discussions.

Student Evaluations

Students enrolled in this course will be evaluated on their quality and knowledge of the topics assigned. They will also be evaluated on their competency on the assigned work, and final examination. The percentages are as follows:

20% - Tests (2)
20% - Final
30% - Essays (3)
20% - Worksheets (8) and Current Event Log
10% - Participation

Grading Scale

90-100 = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
Below = F

Teacher Evaluation

Every student has the right to complete a teacher evaluation at the completion of any course. This course does comply with the teacher evaluation policy of the institution. The students complete the evaluations anonymously. The professor of the course is not present in the classroom while students complete evaluations. The evaluations are then placed in an envelope and sealed. They are then taken to the Transitional Studies department by a student, and given to the department secretary. The director of Transitional Studies, Dr. Wilma Taylor, reads all teacher evaluations. After final grades have been submitted to the registrar, faculty are given the evaluations for the current semester, and asked to review. Teacher evaluations are pertinent in helping faculty improve and continue teaching with excellence.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend classes regularly and punctually. If a student misses a class, it is the student's responsibility to find out what assignments were given and when they are due, as well as any other important information that transpired during the missed class. Excessive absences can result in failure of this course.

Late Work and Makeup Work

Late work is not encouraged, nor is it accepted. Students are expected to turn in all assignments on time. All assignments are to be done to the specifications outlined by the instructor.

Outline of Course Content

Th 3 June	Course introduction and orientation
Tu 8 June	Reading and questions sample
Th 10 June	Controversies in the News. Read chapter 1 "Thinking"pp.1-19 and 28-42. Complete questions at the end of the chapter, and

	Worksheet # 1. Class discussion.
Tu 15 June	Complete current events log # 1, and share with peers. Receive assignment for first essay.
Th 17 June	Read chapter 2 "Thinking Critically" pp. 44-60 and 62-89. Complete questions at the end of the chapter, and Worksheet # 2. Class discussion.
Tu 22 June	Complete current events log # 2, and share with peers. Work on essays.
Th 24 June	Read chapter 3 "Solving Problems" pp. 90-116 and pp. 120-129. Complete questions at the end of the chapter, and Worksheet # 3. Class discussion.
Tu 29 June	Complete current events log # 3, and share with peers. **Essay # 1 due**. Receive assignment for essay # 2.
Th 1 July	Read chapter 4 "Perceiving" pp. 130-162. Complete questions at the end of the chapter, and Worksheet # 4. Class discussion.
Tu 6 July	**Test # 1.** Complete current events log # 4, and share with peers. Work on essays.
Th 8 July	Read chapter 5 "Believing and Knowing" pp. 164-199 and pp. 201-212. Complete questions at the end of the chapter, and Worksheet # 5. Class discussion.
Tu 13 July	Complete current event log # 5, and share with peers. **Essay # 2 due**. Receive assignment for essay # 3.
Th 15 July	Read chapter 6 "Language and Thought" pp. 231-265. Complete questions at the end of the chapter, and Worksheet # 6. Class discussion.
Tu 20 July	**Test 2.** Complete current events log # 6, and share with peers. Work on essays.
Th 22 July	Read chapter 7 " Reporting, Inferring, and Judging" pp. 351-392. Complete questions at the end of the chapter, and Worksheet # 7.
Tu 27 July	Complete current events log # 7 and share with peers. **Essay # 3 due.**

Th 29 July	Read chapter 8 "Constructing Arguments" pp. 394-405 and pp. 407-420. Complete questions at the end of the chapter, and Worksheet # 8. Review for final examination.
Tu 3 August	**Final Examination**

APPENDIX B

LESSON PLANS

TSE 098

Lesson Plan For Tuesday, July 13, 2002

Course: TSE 098 **Time: Tu &Th 1- 3** **Professor: Nicolette Rose**

Title
Peer Evaluations

Objectives
1. To elicit critical thinking
2. To stimulate reading with a critical eye
3. To critique constructively, peer writing
4. To strengthen writing skills

Expected Outcome
1. Students will be able to recognize and correct grammar and mechanics.
2. Students will be able to critique and revise their own work after reading peer papers.
3. Students will learn new ideas about approaching writing by reading peer papers.
4. Students will be able to share openly their own writing.

Activity
Students will be asked to exchange rough drafts with a peer. Next, students will be asked to read peer essays, and then answer questions on the "Peer Review Sheet." Students will then be asked to give essays back to the owners, and share in small groups their comments about the peer paper that they read. Lastly, a volunteer from each group will share a peer paper that he/she read with the entire class.

Material/Resources
The students will be evaluated on the level of constructive criticism demonstrated in the peer review, and the amount of effort put forth in the actual rough draft. Finally, the student will be evaluated on the level of interaction with peers.

Teacher Evaluation
The instructor will be evaluated on the level of the interest and enthusiasm demonstrated by students. The instructor will also be evaluated by selected questions on evaluative methods.

Peer Review

Writer_____ Reader_____

1. What do you like about the writing? What moments of writing are particularly thoughtful or moving? Be specific.

2. How well does the essay satisfy the assignment? What ideas require further development? What ideas are unclear?

3. Please explain the organization of the essay. If the essay does not follow a clear organization, pleas tell the writer what areas need reorganization.

4. What consistent problems of grammar and/or mechanics do you find? What grammatical or mechanical changes should be made?

5. What is the main point of this essay?

6. Can you identify the thesis statement? If so, what is the thesis statement?

7. List the topic sentences of this essay. Do the paragraphs that follow the topic sentences support the topic sentences? Do the topic sentences introduce the paragraphs well?

8. Does the essay utilize good examples and transitional phrases? If not, where can some examples and transitional phrases be inserted?

9. Describe how the writer uses clear, specific examples and explanations.

10. What other questions might the audience have that the writer has yet to anticipate or address?

11. What grade do you believe this essay has earned? Explain your answer.

12. What might the writer do to improve the essay? In other words, what changes should be made to this essay? Why?

13. After reading and critiquing your classmate's paper, what questions do you have about your own paper? Where do you feel you need the most attention?

14. Review questions 1-12, and apply these questions to your own paper.

TSE 099

Lesson Plan Tuesday, June 8, 2002

Course: TSE 099 **Time: Tu &Th 8-10** **Professor: Nicolette Rose**

Title
Impromptu Writer's Resume

Objectives
1. To examine individual writing experience
2. To stimulate desire to improve writing abilities
3. To strengthen awareness of academic interests
4. To critique writing strengths and weaknesses

Expected Outcome
1. Students will be able to critique objectively their writing experience.
2. Students will be able to share openly their writing experience.
3. Students will develop a desire to explore writing further.
4. Students will recognize growth in their writing.

Activity
Students will be given a handout entitled "Impromptu Writer's Resume." Next, students will be asked to read the assignment carefully and respond to the questions. Students should write at least one paragraph for each of the five (5) sections in the assignment. Finally, when students have completed the assignment, they should share information from the assignment in small groups.

Materials/Resources
The materials utilized will be an "Impromptu Writer's Resume" handout, and computers in the writing lab.

Methods of Evaluation
The students will be evaluated on the level of effort and insight demonstrated in the "Impromptu Writer's Resume." Students will also be evaluated on the thoroughness of their responses to the questions. Finally, students will be evaluated on the level of interaction with peers.

Teacher Evaluation
The instructor will be evaluated on the level of interest and enthusiasm demonstrated by students. The instructor will also be evaluated by selected questions on evaluative methods.

Impromptu Writer's Resume

Prepare an informal writer's resume to take stock of what you bring to your writing class. Give your instructor and your peers a preliminary answer to questions like the following: Who are you? What might you be able to contribute to the class? What special background or experience do you have that you could draw on in your written work? What are your special academic interests or career goals? What has been your previous experience as a writer? Write a developed paragraph under each of the following headings:

Personal Background
What in your personal experience has helped make you the kind of person you are? For instance, how important were family ties in your growing up? Did ethnic origin or a language or culture different from the mainstream play a role? Did you have a religious upbringing? Did you experience any turning points or traumatic events?

Education
What kind of schools did you attend? For instance, what was the social or racial mix of the students? Did any teacher make a special impression on you? Did you have favorite subjects or encounter special hurdles? What did you learn from your schooling besides academic subjects?

Work or Career Interests
What has been your exposure to the world of work? Have you had any work experience or experience as a volunteer? What are your tentative career interests and why?

Academic Specialization
In college, have you become involved in a field of study or major? What is its appeal to you – is there a personal connection? What special challenges or obstacles does your chosen field present? Could you initiate an outsider into the basic assumptions, procedures, or mindset of people in the field?

Previous Writing Experience
Can you single out a paper or writing project that taught you something about writing? What was the topic? What did it mean to you? How did you put the paper together? What material did you use? How did you organize it? What was the main point, and what evidence or arguments did you use to support it? What feedback did you receive, and how did you respond to it?

Share information from the impromptu writing in small groups.

TSR 098

Lesson Plan For Tuesday, July 20, 2002

Course: TSR 098 **Time: Tu & Th 11-1** **Professor: Nicolette Rose**

Title
Short Story Response
"Sonny's Blues"

Objectives
1. To elicit critical thinking
2. To stimulate reading short stories insightfully
3. To develop analytical skills
4. To critique various types of readings
5. To strengthen reading comprehension skills

Expected Outcomes
1. Students will be able to recognize literary elements in short stories.
2. Students will be able to critique intelligently, short stories.
3. Students will be able to connect analysis of short stories with their writing.
4. Students will be able comprehend various types of readings more analytically.

Activity
Students will be asked to read "Sonny's Blues" by James Baldwin. Next, students will be given an assignment entitled "Short Story Response." Students will then be asked to read the "Short Story Response" and respond to the various questions accordingly.

Materials/Resources
The materials utilized will be a "Short Story Response" handout, the student's textbook, and the writing lab.

Methods of Evaluation
The students will be evaluated on the level of analysis and comprehension in their responses, and the amount of effort, as well as thoroughness.

Teacher Evaluation
The instructor will be evaluated on the level of responses completed by the students. The instructor will also be evaluated on the level of enthusiasm demonstrated by students.

Short Story Response
"Sonny's Blues"

Directions: Type in complete sentences your response to the following questions. Your answers to these questions need to demonstrate that your understanding of the story goes beyond a literal reading of the story's plot line to include some degree of analysis or interpretation. Often short and simple answers are not enough to show your understanding of the story. Take your time to explain your answers thoroughly.

1. Why do you think the narrator, after his daughter dies, chooses to write to Sonny, whom he has ignored for years?

2. Why does Sonny's letter make the narrator feel guilty?

3. Why do Isabel and her family seem to disapprove of Sonny? Does the narrator also disapprove of his brother? Why would Sonny give up his "future" for music?

4. What does the narrator mean when he says of his student, "All they really knew were two darknesses, the darkness of their lives...and the darkness of the movies"? What is suggested by these and other references to darkness?

5. "Sonny's Blues" contains a story within a story, the mother's tale of the narrator's father and his father's brother. What is the significance of this story?

6. Explain the importance of the sidewalk revival and of the location from which each brother views it.

7. In the last scene, the narrator enters Sonny's world for the first time. Explain the symbolism of the location, the jazz, and the drink.

8. What is the setting of the story?

9. A key to an understanding of this story is an understanding of the character of the narrator since we see Sonny only through his eyes. How does the narrator perceive himself? How does this perception affect his opinion of Sonny?

10. At the end of the story, are things resolved for the narrator and Sonny? Explain your answer.

TSR 099

Lesson Plan For Tuesday, June 10, 2002

Course: TSR 099 **Time: Tu &Th 4-6** **Professor: Nicolette Rose**

Title
Worksheet # 1
Mary Barnett court case

Objectives
1. To elicit critical thinking
2. To stimulate reading with a critical eye
3. To develop argumentative skills
4. To increase analytical skills

Expected Outcomes
1. Students will be able to analyze arguments from different perspectives.
2. Students will be able to read and think critically.
3. Students will learn new ideas about approaching writing.
4. Students will be able to recognize factual information in reading.

Activity
Students will be given a handout entitled "Worksheet # 1: Mary Barnett." Next, students will be asked to read the chapter in the textbook that the Mary Barnett court case is found. Students will then be asked to respond to the questions on the worksheet. Finally, students will be asked to share their responses in small groups.

Materials/Resources
The materials utilized will be a worksheet handout, course textbook, and computers in the writing lab.

Methods of Evaluation
The students will be evaluated on the level of insight that is demonstrated in the worksheet exercise. Students will also be evaluated on their ability to argue two sides. Finally, students will be evaluated on the amount of effort put forth, and their interaction with peers.

Teacher Evaluation
The instructor will be evaluated on the level of competency found in the worksheets. The instructor will also be evaluated by the level of interest and enthusiasm demonstrated by students.

Worksheet # 1
Mary Barnett Court Case

This worksheet is based on your text pp. 30-36 regarding the Mary Barnett court case.

1. List the undisputed fact of this case

2. Now go back to number one (1) and cross off any of the facts that you think are irrelevant.

3. List the arguments for both sides.

Prosecution **Defense**

4. Now mark with an * the arguments above which you consider to be most persuasive. You must select at least one for each side, and you may select more.

5. Now vote: Guilty or Not Guilty of second-degree murder.

6. List below the specific facts (see question # 1) which led to your verdict.

7. Now explain any opinions that influenced your decision.

APPENDIX C

EFFECTIVE WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

TSE 098

HBC
TSE 098
N. Rose

Essay Assignment
Summer 2002
Due Date: July 15

Overcoming Obstacles Narrative

For weeks now, we have discussed Lucy Grealy's memoir *Autobiography of a Face*. In her memoir, Grealy tells her great story of facing the enormous obstacle of being diagnosed with a potentially terminal cancer at age nine. She describes her experience of great suffering and remarkable strength without sentimentality and with considerable wit.

Obstacles enter the lives of everyone, and often create high levels of stress. However, when an obstacle is overcome, it can create an incredible feeling of victory, just as Lucy Grealy so candidly proves in her memoir. For this assignment, write about an obstacle or an unpleasant event or experience that resulted in personal growth for you. How has your identity been effected? How did you come to terms with the experience, and what did you ultimately learn from it? Reflect back on Grealy's memoir. How does her story make connections to you and your own life? With any kind of public writing, one must make a choice about what or how much he or she is willing to reveal. Your writing need not focus on something as painful as Lucy Grealy's battle with cancer, but choose an obstacle that you feel free to share.

This paper will be ultimately completed outside of class, although time will be given during class to work on it. The length of the essay should be three (3) double-spaced, typewritten pages. Do not double-space twice between paragraphs. A new paragraph is noted simply with an indention. Each typed page should be numbered along with your last name in the top right-hand corner. Students are expected to utilize the normal font size of twelve (12) on computers, as well as adhere to the correct margin setting of one (1) inch. Any paper not adhering to MLA format will be penalized. Lastly, each paper is required to have a title page with the professor's name, class time, date, and student's name. Please be advised that all assignments must be turned in at the start of the class hour only. Please remember, late papers will not be accepted.

TSE 099

HBC
TSE 099
N. Rose

Essay Assignment
Summer 2002
Due Date: June 24

Moment of Being Narrative

We have discussed "moments of being" and how writing about them brings us closer to understand them, to giving them meaning in our lives. For weeks, we have examined Maya Angelou's memoir *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings*. In her memoir, we witness Angelou's journey through cultures as she travels from Stamps to St. Louis. Clearly, she meets difference there, trying to find her footing as she walks in two worlds. It can even be suggested that Angelou experiences at least two things that can be considered "moments of being." Perhaps it is meeting her mother for the first time, or her interaction with her "first life-line," Ms. Flowers. Nonetheless, Angelou demonstrates that moments of being are meaningful, personal experiences that will vary from person to person.

For this assignment, write an essay about a "moment of being" that has shaped your identity. How has your concept of identity both personally and abstractly been affected? What have you learned from your "moment of being?" Reflect back on Angelou's autobiography. How has this memoir or any other recollection made connections to you and your own life? Be sure to make it clear to the reader why you are selecting your personal account as a "moment of being." Your essay should include specific examples and details in order to support your points. With any kind of public writing, one must make a choice about what or how much he or she is willing to reveal. Choose a "moment of being" that you feel free to share.

This paper will be ultimately written outside of class, although some time will be given during class to work on it. The length of the essay will be three (3) double-spaced, typewritten pages. Do not double-space between paragraphs. A new paragraph is noted simply with an indention. Each typed page should be numbered along with your last name in the top right-hand corner. Students are expected to utilize the normal font size of twelve (12) on computers, as well as adhere to the correct margin setting of one (1) inch. Any paper not adhering to MLA format will be penalized. Lastly, each paper is required to have a title page with the professor's name, class time, date, and student's name. Please be advised that all assignments must be turned in at the start of the class hour only. Remember, late papers will not be accepted.

TSR 098

HBC
TSR 098
N. Rose

Reading Analysis
Summer 2002
Due Date: June 24

"The Rocking-Horse Winner"

We have discussed short stories, and how they impact the minds of readers. We have also examined how the literary world that many writers create is often influenced by their philosophy, their view of the world, and their purpose. The elements of a story are not happenstance, but play a part of a careful plan. Understanding the plan, and seeing the reasons behind it is not only to know the surface meaning, but also to comprehend the deeper, more subtle message in a work.

For this assignment, write an essay that analyzes one of the literary elements addressed in D.H. Lawerence's "The Rocking-Horse Winner." These elements include plot, point of view, character, setting, symbols, irony, and theme. Take into account all the pertinent factors of the story you choose. Be sure to refer to the text for examples as well as support for your claims.

This paper will ultimately be written outside of class, although some class time will be given. The length of the analysis should be three (3) doubled-spaced, typewritten pages. Each typed page should be numbered along with your last name in the top right-hand corner. Students are expected to utilize the normal font size of twelve (12) on computers, as well as adhere to the correct margin setting of one (1) inch. Any paper not adhering to MLA format will be penalized. Lastly, each paper is required to have a title page with the professor's name, class time, date, and student's name. Please be advised that all assignments must be turned in at the beginning of the class hour only. Remember, late papers are not accepted.

TSR 099

HBC
TSR 099
N. Rose

Essay Assignment
Summer 2002
Due Date: June 29

Argumentation on Controversy

Though we often think of argument as referring to disagreements, quarrels, or even fights, we have learned to look at argument as a form of thinking. Argument is a combination of reasons logically leading to a conclusion.

As we establish our knowledge and beliefs and clarify our own views of the world, we are continually exposed to differing views regarding debatable topics and controversial issues. To decide for ourselves what to believe, we need to evaluate arguments carefully. This type of analysis is an intellectual exercise that can be done without regard to whether you agree or disagree with the reasons and the conclusion.

For this assignment, you will be expected to demonstrate your ability to look at both sides of a controversial issue. The issue you will be writing about is the controversy in the news you selected for Lesson 1.

Your paper should contain a brief summary of the controversy. Include here a reference to the publication, date, and title of the article you are using. Then include a discussion of people or organizations involved, actions which occurred, and subsequent reactions.

Next, clearly explain the two sides (or more) of the issue. Show here that you understand the facts and the arguments for both sides. Think about the analysis you practiced with the Mary Barnett case and your analysis of euthanasia/assisted-suicide.

Finally, explain clearly your opinion and the reasons for your opinion. Be as specific as you can. Be logical as you support your opinion with facts, as you know them from the article you selected. You may also include here – as support – authorities, references, and personal experiences.

Use your best writing abilities. Although the grading of this essay will concentrate primarily on your critical thinking skills, the higher grades will go to the students who demonstrate good critical thinking and good writing using the established standards of written English. Turn in your best work possible.

Format should be typed and double-spaced, using the normal font size of twelve (12). Your last name should be typed in the upper right of each page, along with the page number. Use one (1) inch margins, and each paper should be three (3) pages in length, with a cover page. Late papers will not be accepted.

APPENDIX D

WRITING LABORATORY REFERRAL FORM

WRITING LABORATORY REFERRAL FORM

Student's Name: _____

Date: _____

Classification: Freshman_____ Sophomore _____ Junior _____ Senior _____

The above student has demonstrated a need for assistance in the following areas:

Paper for class _____

Mechanics:

- Spelling _____
- Punctuation _____
- Grammar _____
- Sentence Structure _____

Paragraphing:

- Unity _____
- Completeness _____
- Coherence _____

Organization:

- Idea Organization _____
- Use of supporting ideas _____
- Transitional Phrases _____

Other areas or concerns:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Faculty Signature _____

Student Signature _____

APPENDIX E

QUESTIONNAIRES AND RESULTS

Writing Course Questionnaire For Faculty

COLLEGE _____ DATE _____

1. How is curriculum structured in the writing courses at your college, and what does each course cover?

2. How many courses in writing are students required to take at your college?

3. What is required of the students to successfully pass your writing courses?

4. Does your college have a writing lab? If so, does the writing lab accompany your writing courses?

5. How many students each semester do you have registered for your ENG 101 course, and how many sections do you offer?

6. What is the success rate of students passing your ENG 101 and ENG 102 courses?

7. Has your college ever had remedial writing courses?

8. If you answered yes to number 7, for what reason(s) did your college terminate the remedial writing courses?

9. How does your college accommodate students who are deficient in their writing?

10. Remedial writing courses have many opposers across the United States. In South Carolina alone, they have been outlawed. Are you personally opposed to remedial education? Please explain your answer.

11. If a student fails a writing course more than once, how many times can that student retake the course?

12. Outside of the classroom, do your students receive one-on-one attention with their writing? Does your college have writing tutors available to help students?

13. Once students successfully pass ENG 101 and ENG 102, are any of these students tracked? If so, what are the success rates of these students in other writing intensive courses?

14. What type of assessment tools does your college utilize at the end of each year?

15. Do you believe that your current writing program is adequate? If not, what are some areas that you believe can be improved?

16. Do you personally believe that your college would benefit from remedial writing courses? Please explain your answer.

17. What are some more facts regarding your writing program that were not asked in this questionnaire that you can add?

FACULTY RESPONSES

Table 1

Question #6(a)

What is the success rate of students passing your ENG101 class?

	College	Passing Rate
Colleges which do not support remediation	Spelman	85%
	Morehouse	80%
	Tougaloo	80%
Colleges which do support remediation	Bethune-Cookman	82%
	Morris Brown	80%
	Oakwood	80%

Source: Taken from responses to Writing Courses Questionnaire for Faculty.

Table 2

Question #6(b)

What is the success rate of students passing your ENG102 class?

	College	Passing Rate
Colleges which do not support remediation	Spelman	85%
	Morehouse	86%
	Tougaloo	84%
Colleges which do support remediation	Bethune-Cookman	86%
	Morris Brown	85%
	Oakwood	85%

Source: Taken from responses to Writing Courses Questionnaire for Faculty.

Table 3

Question #7

Has your college ever had remedial writing courses?

	College	Responses	Still Does
Colleges which do not support remediation	Spelman	Yes	No
	Morehouse	Yes	No
	Tougaloo	Yes	No
Colleges which do support remediation	Bethune-Cookman	Yes	Yes
	Morris Brown	Yes	Yes
	Oakwood	Yes	Yes

Source: Taken from responses to Writing Courses Questionnaire for Faculty.

Table 4

Question #8

Why did your college terminate remedial writing courses?

College	No Resources	Student Pressure	Parental Pressure	Opposition by Administration
Spelman	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Morehouse	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tougaloo	Yes	Not really	Not really	Yes

Source: Taken from responses to Writing Courses Questionnaire for Faculty.

Table 5

Question #9

How does your college accommodate students' writing deficiencies?

	College	Send to the Lab	Send to Remediation	Other Assistance
Colleges which do not support remediation	Spelman	Yes	No	Yes
	Morehouse	Yes	No	Yes
	Tougaloo	Yes	No	Yes
Colleges which do support remediation	Bethune-Cookman	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Morris Brown	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Oakwood	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: Taken from responses to Writing Courses Questionnaire for Faculty.

Table 6

Question #10

Are you personally opposed to remedial writing?

	College Faculty	Yes	No
Colleges which do not support remediation	Spelman	9 (90%)	1 (10%)
	Morehouse	8 (80%)	2 (20%)
	Tougaloo	8 (80%)	2 (20%)
Colleges which do support remediation	Bethune-Cookman	2 (20%)	8 (80%)
	Morris Brown	1 (10%)	9 (90%)
	Oakwood	1 (10%)	9 (90%)
	Total	**29 (48.33%)**	**31 (51.67%)**
TOTAL = 60 respondents			

Source: Taken from responses to Writing Courses Questionnaire for Faculty.

Table 7

Question #15

Do you believe your current writing program is adequate?

	College Faculty	Yes	No
Colleges which do not support remediation	Spelman	8 (80%)	2 (20%)
	Morehouse	7 (70%)	3 (30%)
	Tougaloo	6 (60%)	4 (40%)
Colleges which do support remediation	Bethune-Cookman	6 (60%)	4 (40%)
	Morris Brown	6 (60%)	4 (40%)
	Oakwood	5 (50%)	5 (50%)
	Total	**38 (63.33%)**	**22 (36.67%)**
TOTAL = 60 respondents			

Source: Taken from responses to Writing Courses Questionnaire for Faculty.

Table 8

Question #16

Do you believe your college students would benefit from remedial writing courses?

	College Faculty	Yes	No
Colleges which do not support remediation	Spelman	1 (10%)	9 (90%)
	Morehouse	2 (20%)	8 (80%)
	Tougaloo	6 (60%)	4 (40%)
Colleges which do support remediation	Bethune-Cookman	9 (90%)	1 (10%)
	Morris Brown	10 (100%)	0 (0%)
	Oakwood	10 (100%)	0 (0%)
	Total	**38 (63.33%)**	**22 (36.67%)**
	TOTAL = 60 respondents		

Source: Taken from responses to Writing Courses Questionnaire for Faculty.

Writing Course Questionnaire For Students

COLLEGE _____ DATE _____

****Please answer these questions as honestly and as openly as you can. Your identity will remain anonymous, so none of your responses will be used against you. This survey is strictly for research purposes only. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.**

1. What is the writing course that you are currently enrolled in?

2. What types of grades do you usually make in writing courses?

3. What is your current grade in this course?

4. Do you struggle with writing assignments? If yes, what do you find difficult or challenging about writing essays?

5. How do you rate your writing skills? (Excellent / Average / Lacking)

6. Does your writing class move at a pace that accommodates your learning? Explain your answer.

7. Do you think that your college should have remedial writing classes for students who demonstrate that they need it?

8. If you are a student that struggles with writing essays, would you object to taking remedial writing courses if they were available at your college?

9. Approximately how many students are in your writing class?

10. If you need additional assistance with your essay assignments outside of your classroom and your professor, what type of services does your college offer?

11. Do you believe that the current writing program at your college is adequate? If not, what types of changes do you think need to be made?

12. After you complete this current writing course, do you feel that you will be prepared for other writing intensive courses at your college? Why or why not? Explain your answer.

STUDENT RESPONSES

Table 9

Question #5

How do you rate your writing skills? (Excellent / Average / Lacking)

	College	Excellent	Average	Lacking
Colleges which do not support remediation	Spelman	25 (25%)	45 (45%)	30 (30%)
	Morehouse	21 (21%)	39 (39%)	40 (40%)
	Tougaloo	15 (15%)	40 (40%)	45 (45%)
Colleges which do support remediation	Bethune-Cookman	10 (10%)	25 (25%)	65 (65%)
	Morris Brown	5 (5%)	15 (15%)	80 (80%)
	Oakwood	5 (5%)	25 (25%)	70 (70%)
	Total	**80 (13.3%)**	**190 (31.7%)**	**330 (55%)**
	TOTAL = 600 respondents			

Source: Taken from responses to Writing Courses Questionnaire for Students.

Table 10

Question #7

Should your college have remedial writing for students who need it?

	College	Yes	No
Colleges which do not support remediation	Spelman	12 (12%)	88 (88%)
	Morehouse	16 (16%)	84 (84%)
	Tougaloo	21 (21%)	79 (79%)
Colleges which do support remediation	Bethune-Cookman	89 (89%)	11 (11%)
	Morris Brown	92 (92%)	8 (8%)
	Oakwood	90 (90%)	10 (10%)
	Total	**320 (53%)**	**280 (46%)**
	TOTAL = 600 respondents		

Source: Taken from responses to Writing Courses Questionnaire for Students.

Table 11

Question #8

If you are struggling with your writing, would you be willing to take a remedial writing class?

Writing Abilities	Yes	No
Excellent	32 (40%)	48 (60%)
Average	125 (55%)	65 (34%)
Lacking	280 (85%)	50 (15%)
Total	**437 (73%%)**	**163 (27%)**

TOTAL = 600 respondents

Source: Taken from responses to Writing Courses Questionnaire for Students.

Table 12

Question #11

Is your school's writing program adequate for students' needs?

	College	Yes	No
Colleges which do not support remediation	Spelman	46 (46%)	54 (54%)
	Morehouse	41 (41%)	59 (59%)
	Tougaloo	38 (38%)	62 (62%)
Colleges which do support remediation	Bethune-Cookman	50 (50%)	50 (50%)
	Morris Brown	48 (48%)	52 (52%)
	Oakwood	53 (53%)	47 (47%)
	Total	**276 (46%)**	**324 (324%)**
	TOTAL = 600 respondents		

Source: Taken from responses to Writing Courses Questionnaire for Students.

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